DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 114 005 HE 006 834

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TITLE The University Experience. Follow-up...1966 Freshmen in 1971. A Biography of a Class Study.
INSTITUTION State Univ. of New York, Buffalo. Student Testing and Pesearch Office.
PUB DATE Jul 75
NOTE 99p.

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.76 HC-$4.43 Plus Postage
DESCRIPTORS Commuting Students; Degrees (Titles); *Educational Benefits; *Educational Experience; Employment; Females; Followup Studies; *Higher Education; Institutional Research; Males; Marital Status; Occupational Aspiration; Personal Interests; Resident Students; Social Experience; *Student Attitudes; *Student Characteristics
IDENTIFIERS *State University of New York at Buffalo; SUNY

ABSTRACT

Those who design educational policy, as well as those who plan to go to college, need to know what societal benefits derive from higher education, for whom the college experience is effective, and what aspects of the experience are valuable to what students. To investigate such concerns, a study was initiated in 1964: (1) to describe to faculty, administration, and other students the characteristics of SUNY/B students and their experience during and after college, and (2) to contribute to existing knowledge of personal, social, intellectual, and vocational development during the college years and early adult life. This document is a 1971 follow-up sample of 1966 freshmen. Generally, the respondents seemed optimistic about themselves and their futures, reporting satisfaction with jobs, education, and marital status, and having experienced a year that brought mostly positive changes in their lives. Some differences were noted in the experiences of men and women and residents and commuters. (Author/KE)

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A Biography of a Class Study

the university experience

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Follow-up...

1966 Freshmen in 1971

HE 006834

STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK
BUFFALO

Student Testing and Research
Division of Student Affairs

THE UNIVERSITY EXPERIENCE

Follow-up...1966 Freshmen in 1971

Larene Nichols Hoelcle

Student Testing and Research
State University of New York at Buffalo
July 1975

My college experience was of great value to me for it not only prepared me for my vocation but also prepared me for life itself. I met many different personalities when I was in college. From some I learned about being out in the world of people. From others I learned that not all people have happy lives; some hated, some loved, others were kind and still others were cruel; but all in all I absorbed the best points of all I met and used them to shape my life.

*College graduates as consumers of higher education and former participants in the experience of higher education, are often regarded as being uniquely qualified to report on the benefits and influences of going to college. They have, of course, individually contributed to the quality of their own college experience and selectively consumed the variety of opportunities for learning and development which college made available to them; in this sense it is inappropriate to consider them as "educational products" comparable to the products of a factory which receives and processes raw material. They were, rather, quite well developed material when they arrived on the college campus, having experienced some 18 years of development with all the cumulative experiences of inheritance and family, neighborhood and friends, church and prior schooling. In this sense, while college offers a kind of experience not offered by any other major institutions in our culture, it is also, for the person experiencing it, part of a cumulative life history of development. Despite the inseparable nature of these phenomena, an evaluation of higher education which ignored the reflections and subsequent lives of alumni would surely be inadequate and incomplete.**

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*C. Robert Pace and Mary Milne, "College Graduates: Highlights From A Nationwide Survey", UCLA Evaluation Comment. Vol. 3, No. 2, November 1971, P.1.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author is grateful for the assistance of the following people:

Helen S. Wyant, Research Director and General Editor, who edited the manuscript, and has given overall shape and direction to the longitudinal study of which this report is a part.

Barbara Meyer, who designed many of the report's figures.

Karen Ziolkowski, who with care and imagination developed graphs, and who, along with Dolores LeFevre, patiently prepared the manuscript.

The former SUNY/B students, whose response to a lengthy and demanding questionnaire made this report possible.

ABSTRACT

This report is the sixth in a series reporting data from a ten-year longitudinal study of a random sample of 100 students in the 1966 entering freshman class at the State University of New York at Buffalo (SUNY/B). The report is based on responses to a questionnaire administered to the sample in 1971, five years after the project was initiated.

Sixty-four members of the 1966 sample participated in the 1971 study. The group was similar to the original sample in terms of sex and 1966 residence status. Of these respondents, seventy-two percent had remained single by June, 1971 and twenty-eight percent had married, including one woman who was seeking a divorce. Eighty percent of the married women had been residents in their freshman year while sixty-three percent of the married men had been commuters.

Four-fifths of the respondents had completed bachelor's degrees by June of 1971, and two-thirds of the group had been involved in some educational program during the year. Thirty percent had been enrolled in graduate or professional programs, all but two of them seeking postbaccalaureate degrees.

Two-thirds of the respondents reported academic aspects of their college experience that were valuable to them, and a majority mentioned social aspects. Two-fifths of the women cited personally valuable college experiences, and a similar proportion of men said college was of value to them vocationally. Eighty percent of the sample mentioned changes they could have made to increase the value of their undergraduate experience, especially academic and social changes.

Two-thirds of the group had worked during the first half of 1971, most of them full-time. A majority were working in business or educational settings, and about half of the group were holding professional jobs. Most expressed positive feelings about their jobs or said that they were all right, at least for the present.

About half reported that their undergraduate work had relevance to their vocation, while about a third said it was not relevant. More than half reported that they were working in the vocational area they preferred.

Themselves, their families, other interpersonal relationships, and their careers were reported by respondents as sources of greatest satisfaction during the past year. Sources of greatest dissatisfaction included self-related frustrations, career, and academic situations. A majority mentioned having undergone some personal change during the previous year. Most often cited were changes toward increased self-satisfaction or confidence. A desire for more satisfaction, confidence, and security was the most frequently hoped for change, followed by a desire for more learning and growth experiences.

Among the interests developed during or subsequent to the college period were intellectual, vocational, or professional pursuits, the arts, participatory or spectator sports, socializing with friends, and some aspects of social action, among other interests. Their societal concerns most often centered around such matters of government policy as the war in Vietnam, the draft, and inflation, although the problems of other people, ecology, and health or educational issues were often mentioned as well. Men had been more active participants in activities to promote social change during the college years than women, but men were less likely than women to report such active participation in 1970-1971.

Generally, the respondents seemed optimistic about themselves and their futures, reporting satisfaction with jobs, education, and marital status, and having experienced a year that brought mostly positive changes in their lives. Some differences were noted between the experiences of men and women, and residents and commuters. These differences will be more thoroughly explored in later reports of the longitudinal study.

FOREWORD

Studies of the vocational and educational outcomes of college attendance have captured the interest of legislators and parents, as well as colleges and universities, as costs have risen and the benefits of college attendance, in terms of career entry and middle class status, seem less assured. Those who design educational policy as well as those who plan to go to college need to know what societal benefits derive from higher education, for whom the college experience is effective, and what aspects of that experience are valuable to what students. Unfortunately, such useful information is scarce, but this and similar research efforts provide some clues to the impact of college on student development - as the students themselves report it.

What difference does college make? What careers do graduates pursue? For whom does higher education open doors to responsible and satisfying careers? What particular experiences make valuable contributions to students' lives? In what way and how well do people feel their college work prepared them for advanced study, marriage, community responsibility, work, and the business of living in general? What aspects of college life need to be changed to provide students with better experiences - and to give the student/parent/tax payer/legislator his or her money's worth?

In order to investigate such concerns, University Research, now Student Testing and Research, initiated in 1964 a developmental research project entitled A Biography of a Class. The purpose of this project is to describe characteristics of SUNY/B students and their experiences during and after college to faculty, administration and other students, and to contribute to existing knowledge of personal, social, intellectual, and vocational development during the college years and early adult life.

Presently a variety of student inputs and perspectives on the University experience are being sought through three major research efforts. First, incoming freshmen are surveyed during the summer preceding their freshman year.

Their values, goals, and perceptions of college are explored, and follow-up studies are projected to observe changes in these perceptions during the college years. Senior classes have been surveyed to explore their unique perceptions of the college experience. Finally, there is a longitudinal study in which two samples of incoming students are followed annually by interview throughout their college years, whether or not they persist, and by questionnaire for the following six years.[1]

This follow-up of a sample of 1966 freshmen in 1971 is part of a series presenting results of the longitudinal study of State University of New York at Buffalo (SUNY/B) students. Its purpose is to portray various aspects of the study participants' lives as they describe them from spring, 1970, to spring, 1971. This and future reports will endeavor to increase our understanding of the college experience and its effect on the lives of young adults.

[1] A list of these reports, with a brief description of their contents, is available upon request from Student Testing and Research, 316 Harriman Library, SUNY/B, Buffalo, New York 14214.

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METHOD

DESIGN

A sample of 100 students, stratified by sex and residence status, was selected from among the 1966 incoming freshmen at the State University of New York at Buffalo (SUNY/B). Members of the sample were interviewed twice during their freshman year, once in each semester, and in the second semester of each of the remaining three years. All are sent questionnaires yearly for the following six years. Everyone is retained in the sample for the full ten years of the project whether they remain in school, transfer, drop out, or fail to complete an interview or questionnaire. Demographic and biographical data such as family income, high school average, and parents' employment and educational background were collected during the summer preceding the sample's freshman year and will be analyzed in conjunction with interview and questionnaire data to illuminate further the group's experience in school and out.

SAMPLE

Sixty-four of the 100 students in the 1966 sample responded to the 1971 questionnaire. These respondents are proportionately very similar to the total 1966 sample in terms of sex and original residence status (Figure 1). When residence status is mentioned, it refers to the living arrangements of incoming freshmen in the fall of 1966. Residents lived in dormitories, and commuters lived in their parental homes.

More than half of the original sample in each sex/residence category responded in 1971 (Figure 2). The lowest response rate was that of resident men, fifty-two percent of whom returned the 1971 questionnaire. The low response rate among resident men is curious since that group had the highest response rate (eighty-six percent) the previous year. The highest response rate in 1971 was that of resident women, nearly three-quarters of whom returned the questionnaire. Overall, sixty-three percent of the former

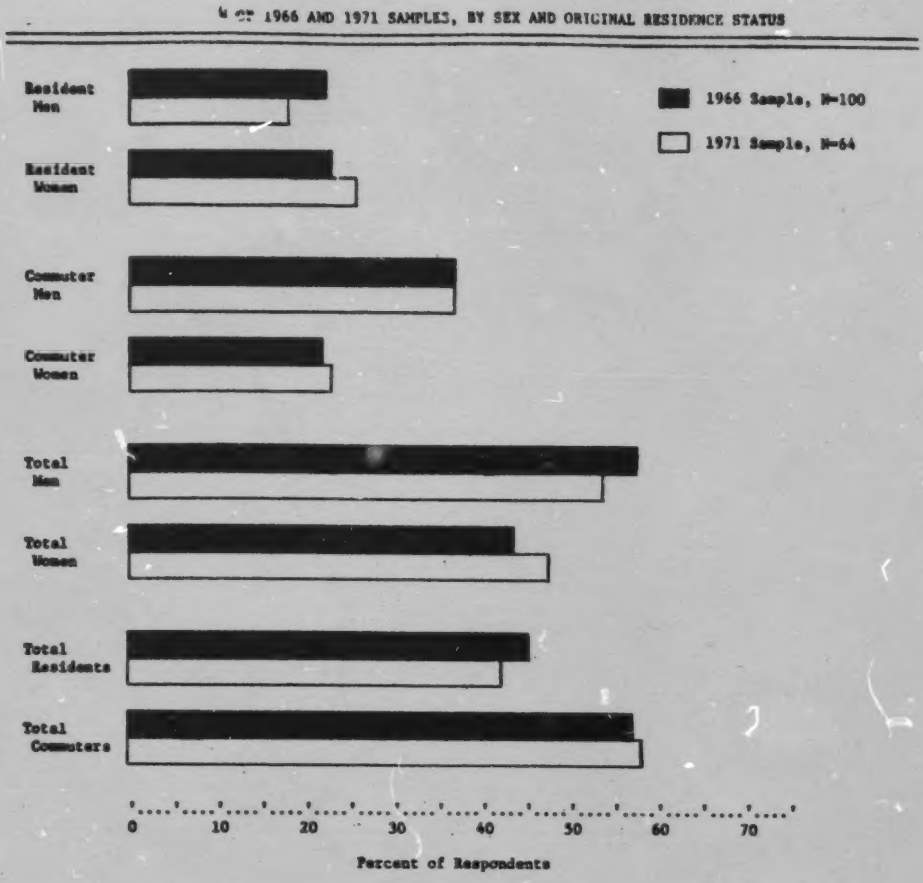
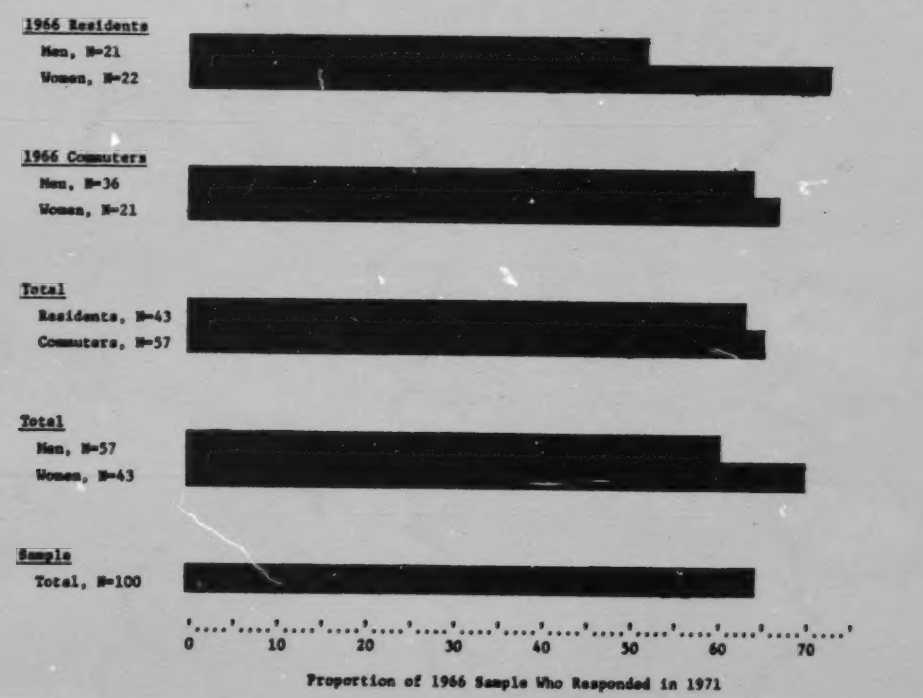


Figure 2 PROPORTION OF 1966 SAMPLE WHO RESPONDED IN 1971, BY SEX AND RESIDENCE STATUS N=100



residents and sixty-five percent of the former commuters responded in 1971, as did sixty percent of the men and seventy percent of the women.

QUESTIONNAIRE

1971 was the first year in the longitudinal study in which information was elicited for the total sample by questionnaire rather than interview. Questionnaires had been sent previously to some members of the sample who were out of state or could not participate in person or by telephone interview.

The 1971 questionnaire concerns educational goals and pursuits, vocational plans and involvements, personal satisfactions and dissatisfactions, leisure activities and interests, societal concerns, and feelings about these various aspects of life experience. The academic and vocational dimensions receive the greatest emphasis since the majority of students had completed or were about to complete their undergraduate education and embark upon careers. The academic dimension focuses on degrees, advanced study, long range educational goals, and the relevance of undergraduate work to the respondent's job. The home and family areas also receive attention since many respondents were leaving parental homes and establishing homes of their own. The personal dimension, including values, goals, satisfactions, interests, and concerns, as well as present life experiences, is explored extensively.

Most questions are open-ended, eliciting unique responses and explanations of the responses given. A copy of the questionnaire is presented in the Appendix.

CLASSIFICATION OF RESPONSES

Each response to each question was noted, and all responses were used as the basis for the classifications which were developed. Three members of the research staff independently classified the responses and together reached agreement on the final coding. Most questions asked and responses obtained can be discussed in terms of the following four dimensions:

Personal - concerned with self, feelings, capabilities, needs, identity, maturity, values, and goals.

Academic/Intellectual - pertaining to intellectual interests, academic experiences, and educational pursuits and goals, including degrees earned or sought, and courses taken.

Vocational - concerned with job or career, and long range vocational goals.

Home and Family - pertaining to relationships with and attitudes and feelings about marital status, living arrangements, spouse and children.

ORGANIZATION AND PRESENTATION OF DATA

The dimensions described above are reported in the first five Chapters. Family and homes, and marital status are reported in Chapter 1. Chapter 2 focuses on academic degree status, current educational involvement, and educational plans and goals. Employment settings and roles, feelings about jobs, and vocational goals are presented in Chapter 3. Chapter 4 includes such personal information as leisure activities, interests, social concerns, and participation in social action. The sources of this year's greatest satisfactions and dissatisfactions, the experiences that were most difficult to cope with, the way group members had changed during the year or would like to change, individual's feelings about themselves, and ways in which the year had been different from respondents' expectations are reported in Chapter 5. In Chapter 6, the value of the college experience to the 1971 sample, and their suggestions for increasing its value, are discussed.

These data are reported in text and figures. Data are reported in terms of percent in order to compare groups with unlike numerical membership. Finally, quotations from the questionnaires, illustrative of various themes and dimensions, are interposed in *script*. These quotations are edited only to assure clarity.

LIMITATIONS OF STUDY

Although the 1971 respondents comprise nearly two-thirds of the original sample and are similar to the 1966 sample in terms of sex and initial residence status, the data reported here are not generalizable to either the original sample or the 1966 freshman class at SUNY/B. Their responses cannot be assumed to characterize the remaining members of the 1966 sample.

No statistical tests were performed on these data because of the small number within each sex, residence and marital status category. Reported differences among groups are based on study of the proportions of the various groups who responded in similar or dissimilar ways. Differences reported reflect at least a ten percent difference in response rates between subgroups.

The free response format, which provides opportunities for unique answers and richness of data, has limitations as well. Multiple-choice or true-false items may eliminate some between-group differences because they offer limited choices and require all students to respond with the same set of options.

INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS

Tabulated data are presented in percentages of the total sample (N=64) unless otherwise noted. For questions where multiple responses are permitted, the total number of responses reported in the figures may exceed the total number of respondents, and the sum of the percentages may be greater than 100 percent. Despite the small numbers in each sex, residence, and marital status category, these data are sometimes mentioned as a matter of interest, but they can not be generalized. Proportions reported in the text are sometimes approximate, but always within two percent of the actual percentage.

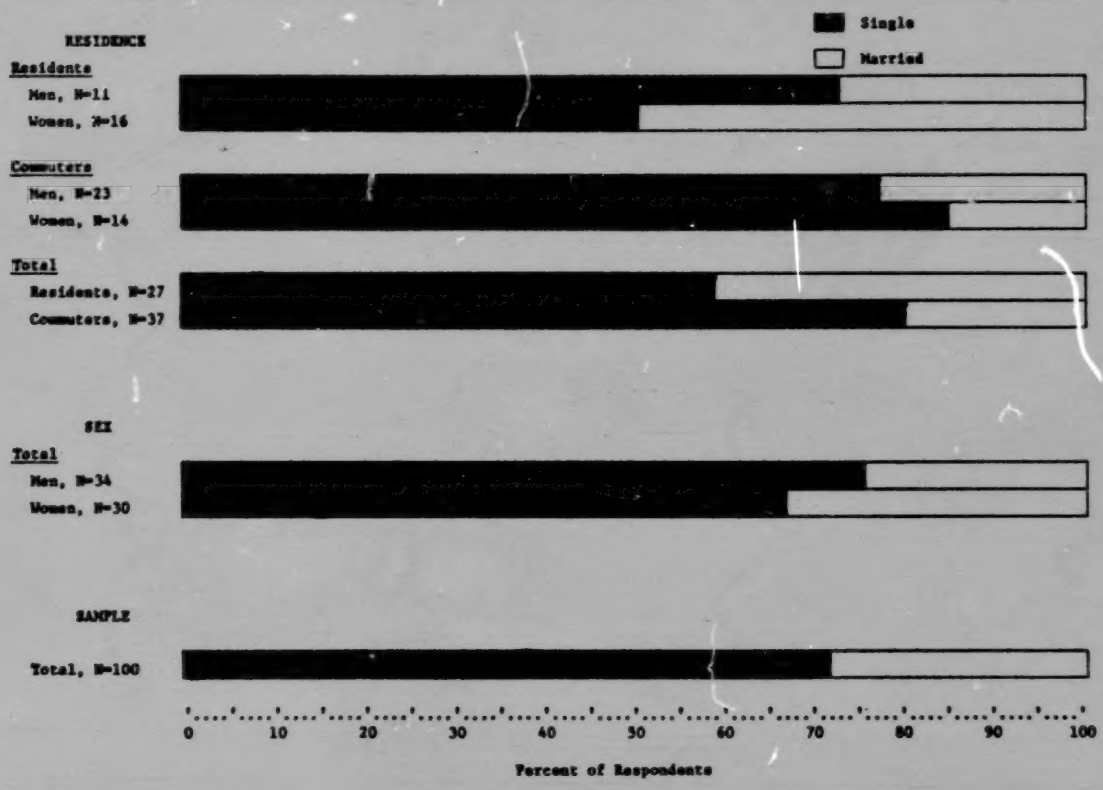
CHAPTER 1

FAMILY AND HOME

MARITAL STATUS

Seventy-two percent of the respondents, three-fourths of the men and two-thirds of the women, were single in June, 1971 (Figure 1.1). More than a quarter of the group had married, most of them during college, and one woman was seeking a divorce.[1]

Figure 1.1 MARITAL STATUS, BY SEX AND ORIGINAL RESIDENCE STATUS

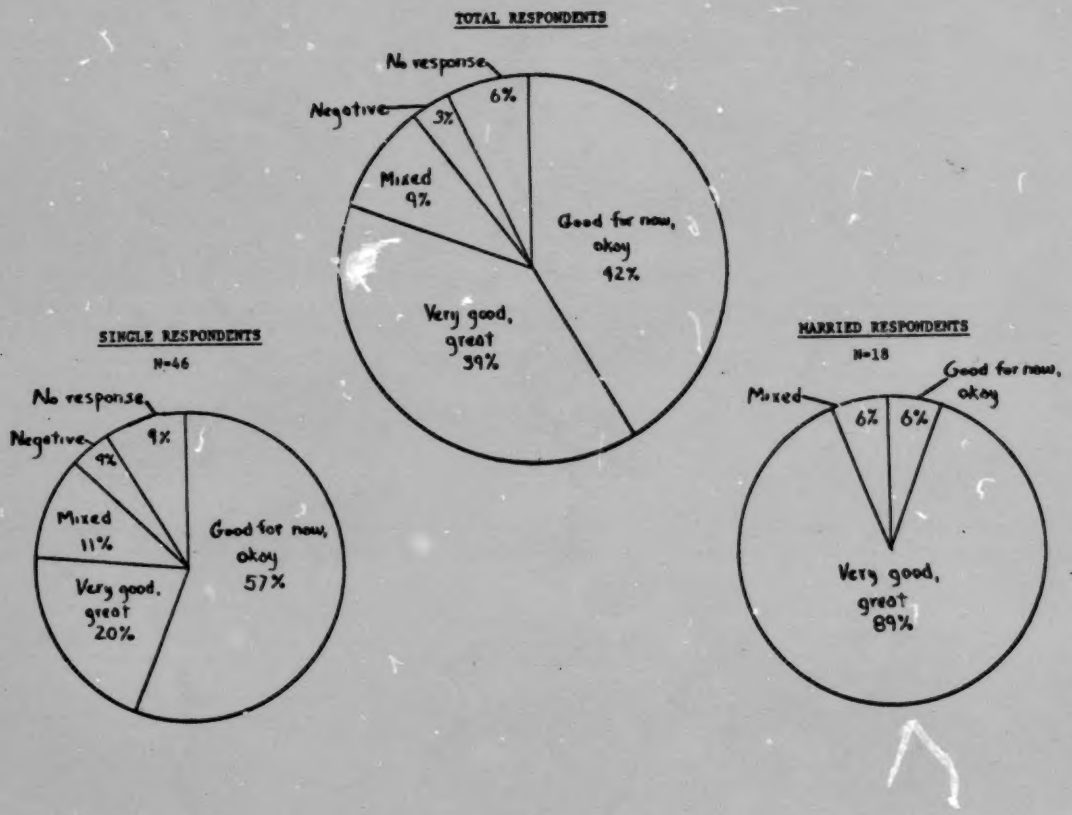


[1] She is included among the married women in figures and text throughout this report.

Feelings about Marital Status

Respondents were asked to describe their feelings about their single or married status. Most people expressed positive feelings (Figure 1.2). Single people reported that their marital status was good for now or okay, while married people generally felt very good or great about their marital status.

Figure 1.2 FEELINGS ABOUT MARITAL STATUS, BY MARITAL STATUS N=64



At this point in my life, I am happy as a single person, since I feel that I must be free to devote a great deal of my time to my career, which is very important to me. I feel that I must express myself as an individual before trying to establish a permanent relationship with another.

Usually I'm happy to be free and single, so that I can grow and explore the world responsible only to myself. Occasionally I worry that I'll never marry - I do hope to, one day. So far, though, I don't think I know anyone I'd like to live with for the rest of my life. Marrying anyone else just doesn't make any sense.

Wonderful! We both love each other very much and are quite sensitive to each other's needs and wants. We complement each other in most situations and yet are able to keep our own individuality. The last 3 1/2 years have been the best of my life!

Fewer than ten percent of the respondents reported ambivalent or mixed feelings.

Mixed feelings. I don't believe I want the commitment to one person other than myself at this point; in fact, I know I couldn't have that commitment now. But I sometimes do get lonely (being alone is nice; being lonely isn't). I miss the good one-to-one relationship a solid marriage must offer.

Only two people, both single, expressed clearly negative feelings.

Explanation of Feelings

Respondents were asked to explain their feelings about their marital status. All of the married people who responded reported that they enjoyed the companionship and sharing of marriage.

I am glad to be able to share the good times, as well as the bad, with the person I love. I also enjoy getting to know and understand my wife's feelings and emotions and to develop a real personal relationship.

Single people most often reported that they were pursuing individual interests. Others reported that they were not yet ready to settle down, or that they wished or planned to be married.

I am very happy that I am single and independent. It enables me to travel and learn from many others, while still being able to share with those I care for.

In two months I'll be getting married, and looking ahead with enthusiasm and optimism.

A quarter of the single men, all satisfied for the present with their status, explained that they could not afford to marry while they were in school or fulfilling their military obligation.

Convenient considering that I am in Dental School and cannot even support myself.

A quarter of the single women reported enjoyment of their freedom and independence, at least for the time being.

I like being single because it gives me the freedom to travel and spend my money "foolishly" occasionally. I would like to get married within two years.

CHILDREN

A few respondents had started their own families by 1971. One man had two children, and two men and three women had one child each. Most reported positive or mostly positive feelings about having children, although one woman expressed mixed feelings about the impact of motherhood on her career considerations. Those with clearly positive feelings about child rearing said that having a child was a wonderful experience for them or reported that they enjoyed sharing their lives with their children. Those with mostly positive or mixed feelings explained that they enjoyed their children but experienced the usual frustrations of parenthood.

I enjoy watching our children grow up and I also enjoy playing with them and sharing my feelings for them with my wife.

Mostly enjoy it. Frustrating at times and, of course, resent self-denial at other times (getting up midnight - restricted social life - days and evenings.)

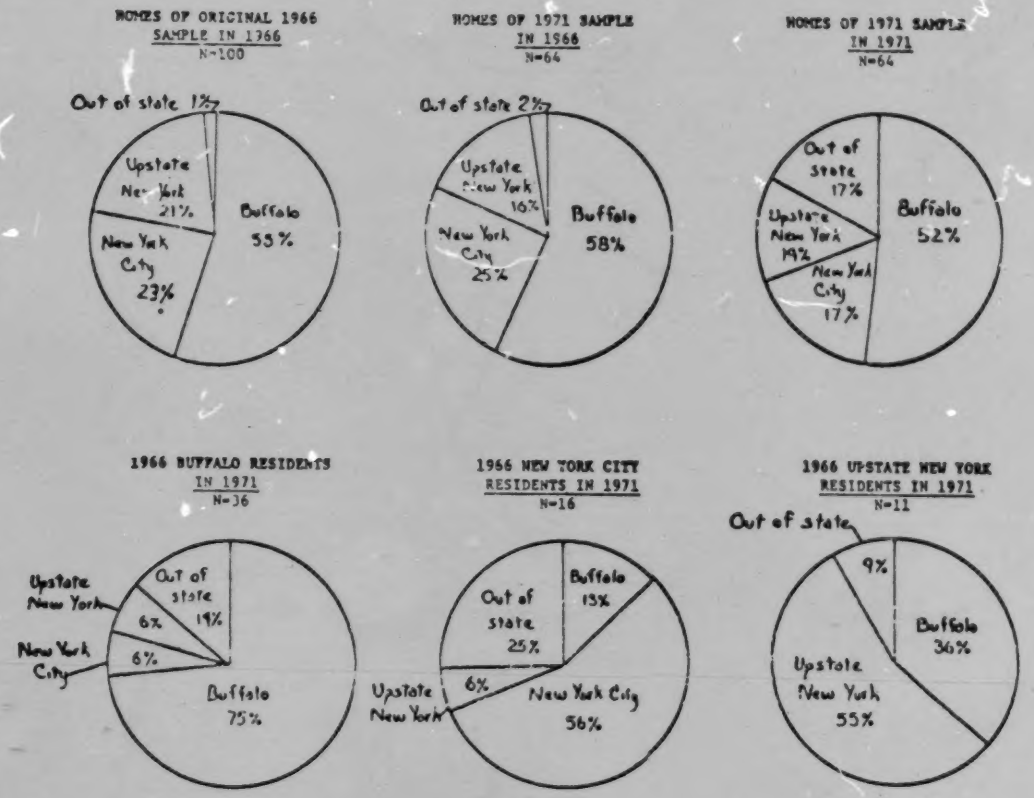
GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION

Half of the 1971 respondents lived in the Buffalo area, and an additional thirty percent lived in other areas of New York State (Figure 1.3.)[2].

[2]The New York City area includes the boroughs of New York plus Long Island. "Buffalo" includes Erie and Niagara Counties, and "Upstate" refers to all other areas of the State.

One respondent each lived in Connecticut, Illinois, Indiana, Maryland, Michigan, New Jersey, and New Mexico; two lived in Pennsylvania, and two in Ohio.

Figure 1.3 LOCATION OF HOMES OF 1971 RESPONDENTS N=64



The 1971 sample closely resembled the 1966 sample in terms of location of 1966 homes. By 1971, the most obvious tendency is the movement of an additional fifteen percent of the group to areas out of New York State.

The tendency for these respondents was to remain in or return to their former geographic location. Three-quarters of those who came to the University from the Buffalo area still lived in Buffalo in 1971; fifty-six percent of those who came originally from the New York City area were residing there in 1971; and fifty-five percent of those from upstate New York were residing upstate in 1971. The sample contained only one out-of-state resident in 1966, and she lived out-of-state in 1971.

Half of the respondents, including three-quarters of those who had lived in Buffalo in 1966, a third of those who had been upstate New York residents in 1966, and thirteen percent of those from New York City, were living in the Buffalo area in 1971. Half of those from upstate New York who remained in Buffalo were completing undergraduate study, and half of those from New York City who were living in Buffalo in 1971 were pursuing postbaccalaureate degrees at SUNY/B.

LIVING ARRANGEMENTS

Setting

Respondents were asked to describe the setting in which they lived (Figure 1.4). Nearly two-thirds were urban dwellers in 1971, and a quarter of the respondents characterized their homes as suburban. Only three people reported living in rural areas.

It should be noted that no definitions were offered the respondents with respect to what constitutes "urban," "suburban," or "rural" areas. Every city has communities whose life style is like that experienced by suburbanites; and suburbs are sometimes so crowded and overgrown as to have lost their suburban flavor. However, some common understanding of these words was assumed and self-reports were accepted at face value.

Type of Dwelling

Respondents were asked to describe their living arrangements in terms of the type of dwelling in which they lived. The majority were living in apartments in 1971 (Figure 1.5). Many of those living in houses were single people who were living with their parental families, and dormitory residents were almost exclusively single men.

People

Over a third of the respondents were living with parents, siblings, or both (Figure 1.6). All of these were single except one married woman who was living with her parents while her husband was in Vietnam. A quarter of the respondents were married and living with their spouses. Twenty percent of the

Living Arrangements of 1971 Respondents

Figure 1.4 SETTING N=64

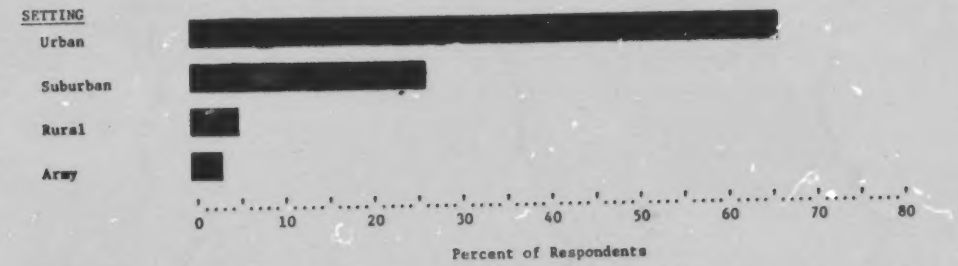


Figure 1.5 TYPE OF DWELLING N=64

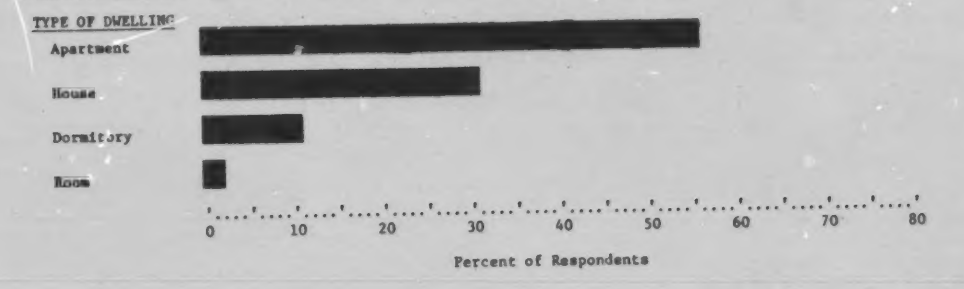
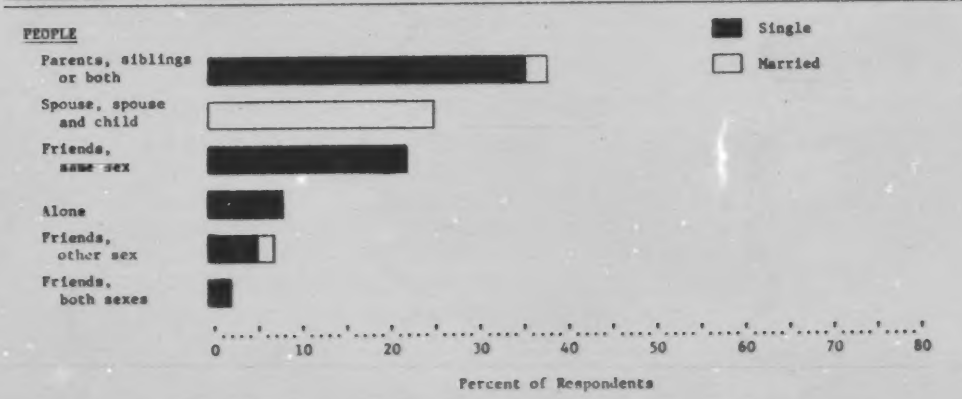


Figure 1.6 PEOPLE, BY MARITAL STATUS N=64

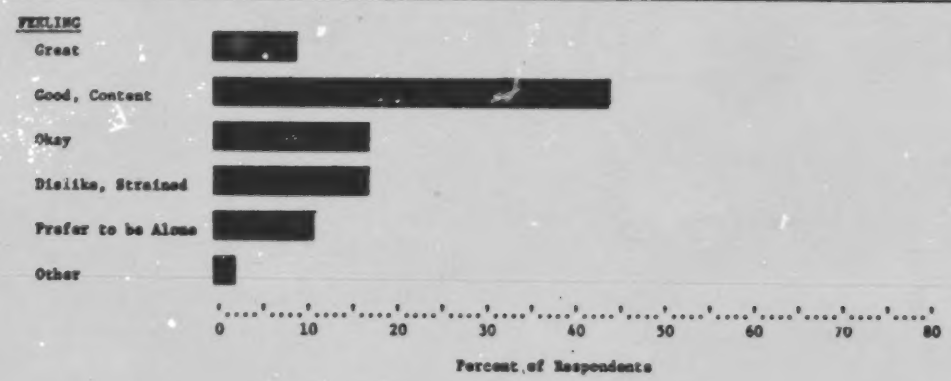


sample were living with friends of the same sex. Smaller proportions were living alone, with friends of the other sex, or with friends of both sexes.

Feelings about Living Arrangement

Forty-four percent of the respondents reported feeling good about or content with their living arrangement, more than reported any other feeling (Figure 1.7). Nine percent felt very good or great about their living arrangement. These positive feelings together were reported by more women than men. Seventeen percent, especially the men, responded less enthusiastically, reporting that their living arrangements were okay or all right. Dislike or strain was reported by seventeen percent of the group, and eleven percent, all single people who lived at home or with friends, said they would have preferred to live alone.

Figure 1.7 FEELINGS ABOUT LIVING ARRANGEMENT B-64



Explanations of Feelings

A great variety of reasons were expressed for respondents' feelings about their living arrangements. The most frequent responses, for those who reported feeling okay, good or content about their living arrangement, was that the arrangements served their present purposes, or that they enjoyed their families or felt an obligation to them.

> *Es muy bueno. Good roommate. Good dorm facilities. Good people in the dorm. Good dorm location (were someone to push me out of my window, I'd wind up in a good bar - or a mediocre hospital).*

Although I don't have the privacy that I would have in my own apartment, I don't have to worry about cooking meals and washing clothes. I am happy to live at home.

I am perfectly satisfied with my living arrangements. I enjoy being with my family, since I have a good relationship with them.

I feel I have a responsibility for my Mother's welfare that I can fulfill best by living at home. Because of my caring for her and the household, my father does not mind my not contributing financially for room and board.

Fourteen percent of the respondents explained their positive feelings about their living arrangements by reporting enjoyment of the social aspects of sharing their experiences with friends. Single people who reported feeling good or okay about their living arrangements explained that these arrangements were financially convenient, as did one-fourth of those who would have preferred to live alone if they could have afforded to do so.

I like it because it is very social.

It's great - you really get a chance to make some good friends.

At present, it is the only set-up that can be afforded. I get tired of commuting once in awhile, but it's not that bad. I get along well with my parents and sister, and it's always relatively quiet for studying.

Well, it is relatively inexpensive, but I would prefer to live alone because I like things, ex. kitchen, to be neat and clean. Noise is also a problem in a dormitory situation.

Single people who disliked their living arrangements or would have preferred to live alone usually explained that they wanted more privacy.

Restless: this is why I am moving for more independence and privacy (no roommate this time).

I hope to find my own apartment as soon as possible. Right now the way I live is shaped not only by my own desires, but also by the needs and demands of those around me. I'd like to minimize that influence and increase my self-awareness.

The neighborhood in which they lived explained the positive feelings of some and the negative feelings of others toward their living arrangements. Those who disliked their living arrangements often blamed the landlord or the physical aspects of their building, or reported that they were lonely.

Love it - fantastic setting, convenient to everything - great house.

Bad News! It's awful, "Big Brother" is alive and well and living next door.

I don't like apartments. I want a house of my own.

Sometimes I like it and sometimes I don't. I like the privacy but sometimes it's lonely - terribly lonely. And other times you could scream - the walls almost close in on you. I learned how to live by myself.

OBSERVATIONS

Sex and residence seemed to make a difference in the marital status of these respondents. Eighty percent of the married women had been residents when they entered SUNY/B, and sixty-three percent of the married men had been commuters. Most of the married respondents had completed undergraduate school in four years, and established homes quickly while they pursued advanced educational experiences and/or started careers. Fully half of the resident women who responded in 1971 had married, and most of them had pursued educational interests and worked as well, during the year.

The living arrangements and life styles of these respondents were changing in 1971 in response to altered circumstances. Single people completing school were often living at home with their parents, and could be expected to change their living arrangements as soon as they finished school, found jobs, or married.

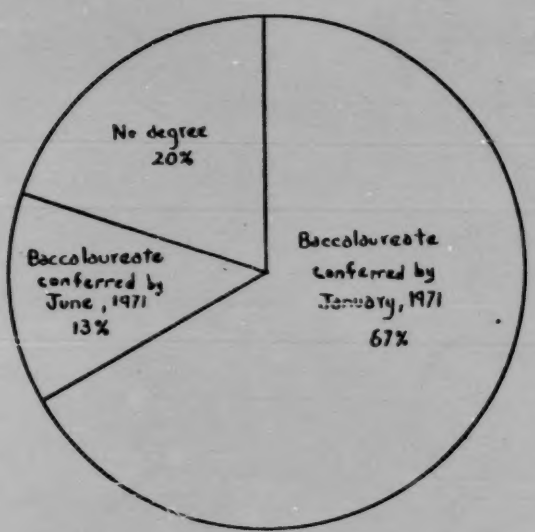
Most respondents were happy with, or at least tolerant of their living conditions, although a few expressed restlessness and frustration with an outgrown roommate or parental home life, or experienced difficulties adjusting to new living conditions.

CHAPTER 2

EDUCATIONAL DEGREES AND INVOLVEMENT

Among the 1971 respondents, sixty-seven percent reported having completed a baccalaureate, and, according to Admissions and Records data, an additional thirteen percent would complete one by the spring of 1971 (Figure 2.1).

Figure 2.1 DEGREE STATUS N=64

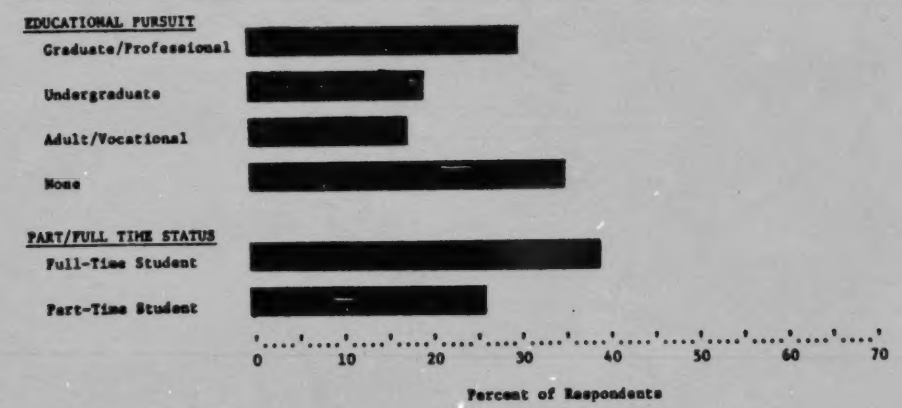


The sixty-four men and women who responded in 197. received degrees in twenty-four different academic fields, with sociology and engineering most often reported by men and education most often reported by women. Sociology was the only field claiming more than ten percent of the majors.

CURRENT EDUCATIONAL PURSUITS

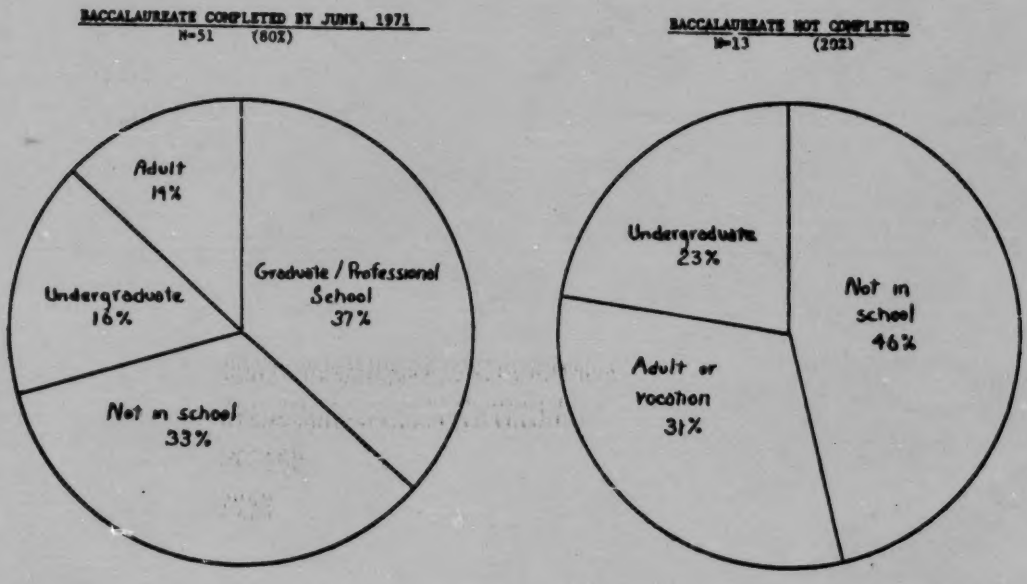
Two-thirds of the respondents had been involved in some educational undertaking during the 1970-1971 school year (Figure 2.2). Thirty percent were enrolled in graduate or professional programs, twenty percent were pursuing undergraduate work, and eighteen percent were involved in adult education or vocacional courses. Two-fifths had been studying on a full-time basis, while a quarter were part-time students.

Figure 2.2 EDUCATIONAL INVOLVEMENT DURING THE YEAR, PART/FULL TIME STATUS N=64



A third of those who had received their bachelor's degree by June of 1971 had been involved in no formal educational undertaking during the previous year (Figure 2.3). Thirty-seven percent had been enrolled in graduate or professional school, sixteen percent had been full-time undergraduates completing degrees, and fourteen percent had been involved in some aspect of adult education. Of those who had not completed a baccalaureate by spring of 1971, a majority had attended school. A quarter of them were undergraduates and thirty-one percent were involved in some adult or vocational courses.

Figure 2.3 DEGREE STATUS AND CURRENT EDUCATIONAL PURSUIT N=64



Feelings about Current Educational Pursuits

Among those who had been involved in some educational undertaking during the year, forty percent reported that they had enjoyed the experience or had found it worthwhile (Figure 2.4).

I love it! My courses are fantastic. The students are mostly in their 20's and are interesting. It keeps me busy 2 nights a week. I'm learning . . .

Graduate school is a discipline and PhD's are not being given for the asking. It's quite obvious that I wouldn't be here if despite all the griping, I didn't find it an extremely worthwhile experience.

I have just returned this spring semester to part-time studies in biology. It is exhilerating to be back in school. I feel as if life is worth something again.

A fifth reported negative feelings or disappointment about their experience, and a similar proportion reported that their educational involvement was simply necessary, without reporting how they felt about it. A few people were ambiguous about the experience, or relieved that their particular educational experience was over.

> *I feel as if I've fallen back into prehistoric days. After a fairly progressive education at SUNYAB, I find dental school a most conservative approach to education. Methods are old and slow to be changed. The courses are so specialized they offer little in the way of motivating me.*

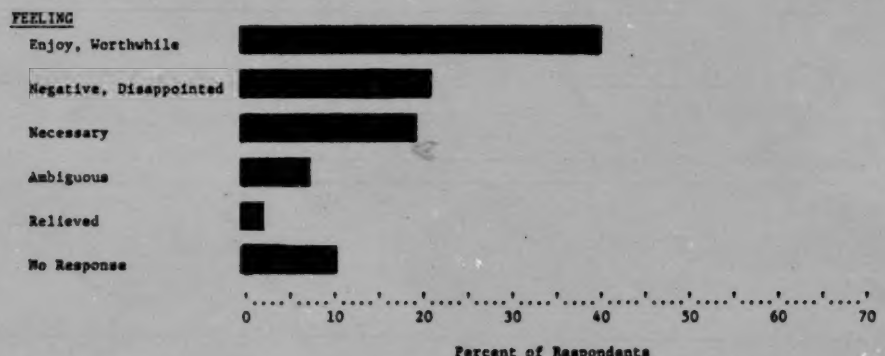
> *Disappointed in many ways. Yet excited by some things. The work here on grad. level is very independent in Art department. I attend very few classes - mostly work on my own with little or nothing being taught to me in academic terms.*

> *A bit disappointing, but my own fault largely. I haven't taken advantage of different lectures, films, exhibits, etc. I see now, though, that one needn't be in a strictly academic environment in order to "experience" an education.*

Most of those people who had taken continuing education courses reported enjoying the experience, and those who had completed undergraduate programs considered their study to be necessary.

Figure 2.4 FEELINGS ABOUT CURRENT EDUCATIONAL PURSUIT N=42

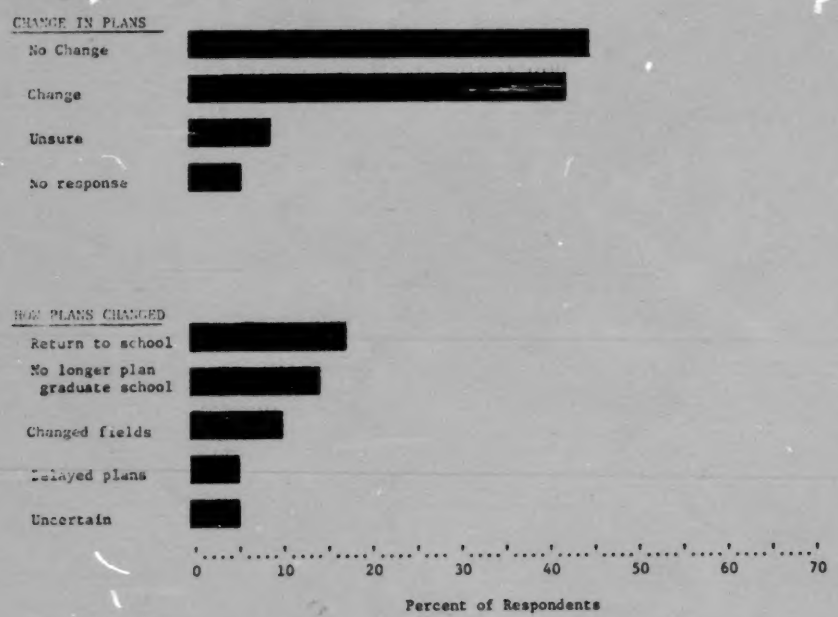
(Proportions are based on the number of respondents who were engaged in some educational undertaking, N=42)



CHANGE IN EDUCATIONAL PLANS

The members of the group were asked whether or not their educational plans had changed during the preceding year, and their responses were evenly divided on this question (Figure 2.5). Forty-five percent reported no change in educational plans while forty-two percent said that their plans had changed; eight percent were unsure whether any change had taken place, and a few did not respond.

Figure 2.5 CHANGE IN EDUCATIONAL PLANS DURING THE YEAR N=64



Seventeen percent of the respondents reported that they had decided to continue in or return to school.

> *I had hoped to move immediately into industry after graduation, possibly carrying on my education while working. I now feel I'll have to return to school for some time before I'll be qualified to enter my profession.*

Fourteen percent had decided not to go to graduate school. These respondents were variously tired of school, busy with their new homes and families, unsure of the value of advanced study to their careers, or ambivalent about the direction their graduate study should take.

> *I had planned to get my Masters Degree, but when I took that course, I could not give it sufficient attention. I found myself too busy to devote my spare time to studying. I am satisfied that my Bachelors Degree will take me as far as I want to go.*

> *I've decided to wait until I'm positive that I want to go to graduate school. I don't want to go in just anything and then never use it. I won't waste the time nor the money for that. Several things seem interesting but none is 92% right. And the school's location shall be important.*

In addition, ten percent reported that they had changed fields of study during the year, five percent had decided to delay their plans for further education, and a few said they were uncertain about their future educational pursuits.

Reason for Change of Educational Plans

When asked what influenced the change in their educational plans, a third of those whose plans had changed reported that the experience of working in their chosen fields had led to their change of plans.

> *I had planned on eventually working on my masters in something. Whether I will or not is now debatable. I love my job and moving further in it will not necessarily require or be helped by furthering my education, except for an occasional programming course. The change doesn't affect me one way or another. I'm playing it by ear.*

> *I completely switched fields from English lit to Exceptional Educational-Mental Retardation. I didn't fit into a regular school system - decided institution work might be more for me - my field work last semester at* (institution) *convinced me I was right - I enjoyed the work with non-verbal trainable retardates tremendously.*

A number of married people explained that their marriages and/or having children had contributed to a change of plans, especially to delay them.

> *I had planned on working and going to school part time to get Masters in either school nurse teaching - or education. Having a baby influenced the change - hopefully I'll be able to carry through with my plans when* (child) *gets older.*

Others reported that they were tired of school, that they had discovered their need for more education, or that the tight job market had affected their change of plans.

> *Plans changed to pursuing more education. After I graduated, I realized that a B.A. in sociology didn't prepare me for very much vocationally, so I had to go on for further training.*
> (Feeling) *Not too good. I really am tired of studying (after 4 years), tired of playing the education game and am desirous of working.*

> *After graduation, I planned to continue my education in history but felt a lot of pressure about future job security. I accepted a graduate position in education in order to secure a teaching job for next year, but intellectually I'm unmotivated and regret the decision. Hopefully, I'll feel more fulfilled once I enter a classroom situation.*

Respondents reported some eagerness to go to work after four years of school and most were successful in finding jobs they considered suitable. Those seeking jobs apparently expected to be vocationally prepared with the completion of a bachelor's degree and expressed some surprise to find that further education would be necessary. Very few seemed angry or bitter about unsuccessful attempts to find the jobs they wanted.

OBSERVATIONS

Differences in the sex, residence, and marital status of the groups seem to be reflected in their responses. These are mentioned with the caution that the numbers in these subgroups are small and the differences are not generalizable to larger samples.

Proportionately more resident men than others had completed a baccalaureate in the conventional four years and had gone directly into postbaccalaureate programs. Commuter men in particular had been finishing their undergraduate work during the previous year, some because they were in five-year programs such as pharmacy. They were more likely than residents to report negative feelings about their educational experiences or to view them as simply necessary, and they were less likely to be considering postgraduate education.

More men than women were in school full time preparing for careers. Women much more frequently than men reported enjoying their present educational undertakings, but many more women than men reported taking adult education courses for pleasure. Women, particularly those who had married, reported changes in their educational plans during the year while men's plans remained more stable. Women were more apt to be working, going to school part time, and modifying their educational plans in light of their work experiences.

Those who were pursuing degrees in medicine, law, dentistry, veterinary medicine, social work, and hospital administration were all men, and with the exception of one man who was pursuing a master's degree in education, those who sought postbaccalaureate degrees in education, librarianship, art, and economics were women.

Those who reported changing their educational plans to return to school or to change fields, decisions which would require spending more time in the pursuit of degrees, were nearly all single. The married respondents were more persistent in their educational plans. When their plans did change, they changed in directions away from further study, at least for the present.

CHAPTER 3

EMPLOYMENT AND VOCATIONAL ASPIRATIONS

The vocational aspirations and pursuits of young adults who have undertaken some college work is of continuing interest to those who are concerned with the value of college experience. Members of the 1966 sample had been asked every year whether or not they were working and how they felt about their jobs. Several had worked at least part time while they were undergraduates. They had been asked in previous interviews what their ultimate vocational goals were, whether or not these goals had changed, and what had influenced the changes. Vocational goals were important to the 1966 sample. In the first interview in the fall of 1966, about a third of the group reported that vocational considerations were among their reasons for attending college.[1] By the third year over half the respondents reported vocational preparation to be at least part of the purpose of a college education for them.[2] Forty-four percent of the senior year respondents reported vocational preparation as a purpose of a college education, citing it less frequently than personal development (sixty-nine percent) and academic or intellectual experience (fifty-nine percent).[3] How had the 1971 respondents pursued their vocational goals?

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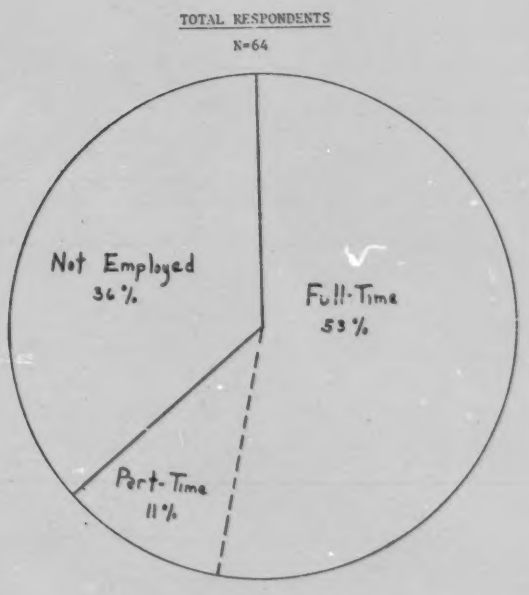
[1]Cathleen M. Kubiniec, Helen S. Wyant, and Jean Mae Alberti, The University Experience, The First Few Weeks. University Research, SUNY at Buffalo, 1968.

[2]Marilyn A.H. Rott, The University Experience, The Third Year, Part I. University Research, SUNY at Buffalo, 1972.

[3]Marilyn A.H. Rott, The University Experience, the Fourth Year, Part II. Student Testing and Research, SUNY at Buffalo, 1973.

Nearly two-thirds of the respondents reported that they were employed in 1971 (Figure 3.1). Those who were not working were asked what occupied their time. Seventy percent were students, thirteen percent were looking for jobs, and a similar proportion were wives and mothers.

Figure 3.1 EMPLOYMENT STATUS N=64



Working on a Masters in Hospital Administration or maybe Comprehensive Health Planning
[Feelings] *Poor. The tuition is so high.*

Presently looking for a job. There do not, however, seem to be any openings in my field - chemistry. Therefore, I plan to get any job available for the time until I can get a job as a chemist somewhere in industry. I am disappointed, but not without hope. I realize that times are hard and therefore, I must keep looking.

Housewife. I'd like to be working - I know I'm forgetting much of the technical part of nursing - hopefully it'll come back easily when I do start working.

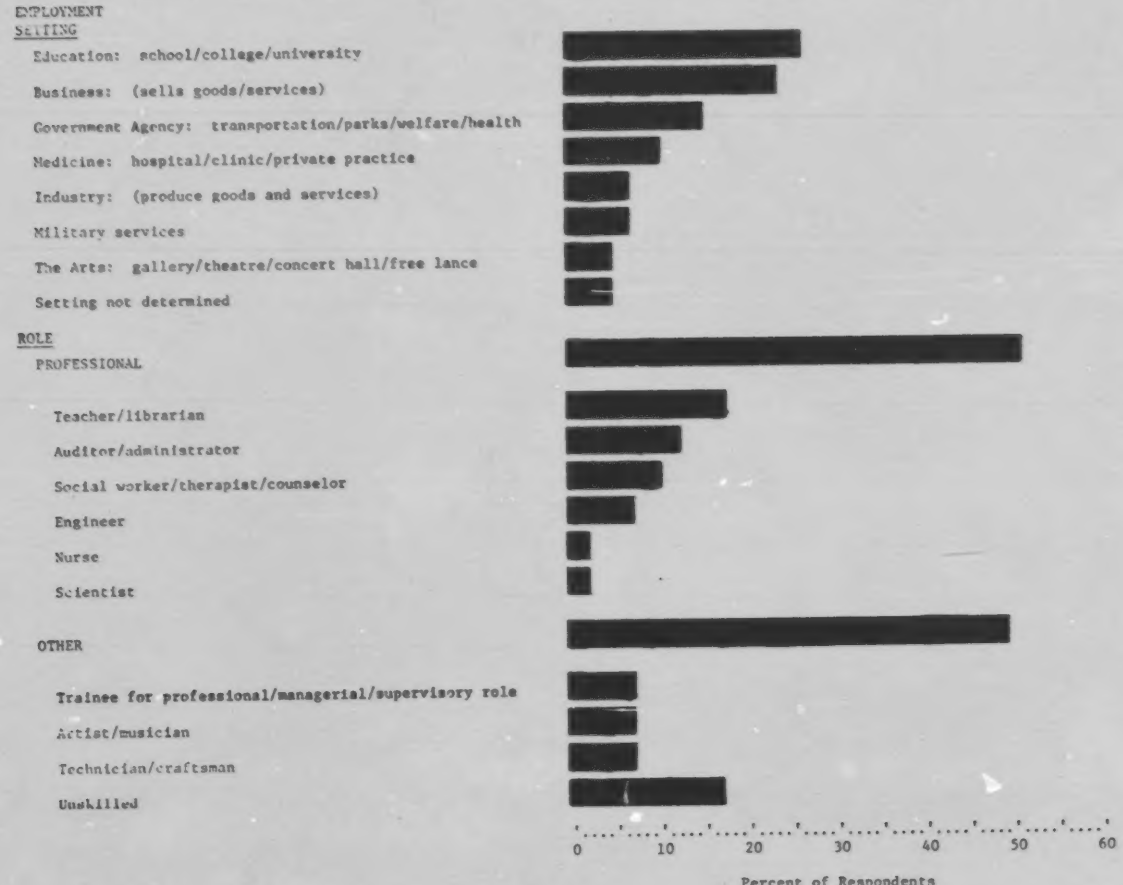
Most of the sample who were employed in 1971 were working full time, a tenth were working part time.

SETTING

Settings in which the respondents were employed are described in Figure 3.2. The two most often reported were education and business, which together provided over half of the jobs. Fifteen percent of those who were employed worked full time for some government agency, and ten percent worked in medical settings. A few men worked in industrial settings, in military services, or in the arts. Two women were employed in settings which were not identified.

Figure 3.2 EMPLOYMENT SETTING AND ROLE N=41

(Proportions are based on the number of respondents who reported being employed in 1971, N=41)



ROLE

Vocational roles are defined as follows:

PROFESSIONAL

Minimum of a baccalaureate or professional certification is required.

Teacher or Librarian
Auditor or Administrator
Social Worker or Therapist
Engineer
Nurse
Scientist or Researcher

OTHER

Trainee: Degree may or may not be required. Includes participants in training programs or practicums leading to advanced positions, certification, or degree.

Artist or Musician: A degree may or may not be required depending upon the setting in which the artist performs.

Technician or Craftsman: Some formal training is required but not a baccalaureate.

Performer of Services: Certain skills may be required, but not formal education or training.

Professional roles together accounted for half of the jobs, all but one of which were full time. Non-professional jobs were usually part time.

Seventeen percent of the jobs were teaching postions in school settings, all but one of them held by women. Twelve percent were administrative positions held by men who worked in business settings, and a tenth were social work positions held by women employed in governmental agencies.

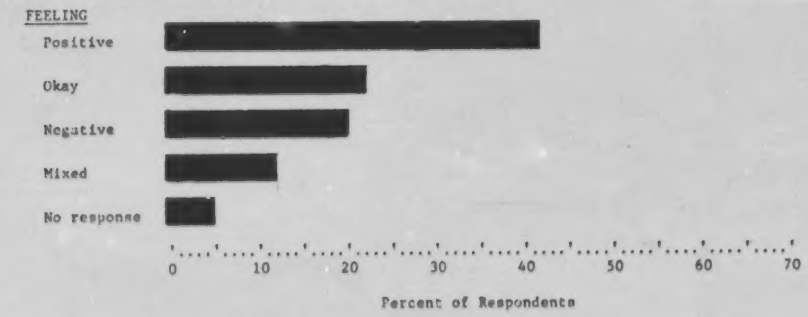
Half of the sample held other than professional jobs. The vocational role accounting for the largest proportion of the jobs reported encompasses a variety of unskilled services. Twenty-seven percent of the sample, or fifty-four percent of the respondents holding other than professional positions, were employed in this type of work. Nearly two-thirds of these jobs were

full time. Trainees, artists or musicians, and technicians or craftsmen each accounted for seven percent of the jobs reported, and appeared in a variety of employment settings.

FEELINGS ABOUT JOB

Those respondents who were employed were asked to describe their feelings about their jobs. Forty-two percent expressed clearly positive feelings; a fifth described their jobs as okay or all right; twelve percent of the group indicated that they had mixed feelings; a fifth reported negative feelings, and five percent didn't respond to the question (Figure 3.3).

Figure 3.3 FEELINGS ABOUT JOB N=41



These responses were similar for those who held professional and other than professional jobs. However, forty-eight percent of those with professional positions reported positive feelings about their work while thirty-five percent of those with other than professional positions did so.

SATISFYING AND DISSATISFYING ASPECTS OF JOB

On the assumption that every job has both satisfying and dissatisfying aspects, regardless of one's overall feeling toward the job, the employed respondents were asked to identify these aspects of their work. Unfortunately, a fifth of the respondents, including nearly a third of the men, failed to do so.

Satisfying Aspects of Work

A fifth of those who were employed stated that the challenge, interest, or diversification in their jobs gave them satisfaction, and fifteen percent cited satisfaction with the people they met in the course of their working lives (Figure 3.4). Twelve percent indicated that the money, benefits, or security work provided was the major, sometimes the only, satisfaction. A tenth derived satisfaction from the fact that their jobs were beneficial to people, and another tenth mentioned personal satisfaction, development, or reward in the work they were doing. Smaller proportions cited satisfaction derived from using their talents productively or holding responsible positions. Nearly a quarter, many of whom had reported negative feelings about their jobs, did not indicate any satisfying aspects of their work.

I enjoy it very much. I find improvement, both physically and behaviorally in individual and groups of students very satisfying. It is dissatisfying because my schedule is haphazard so I therefore do not have the continuity that I would like.

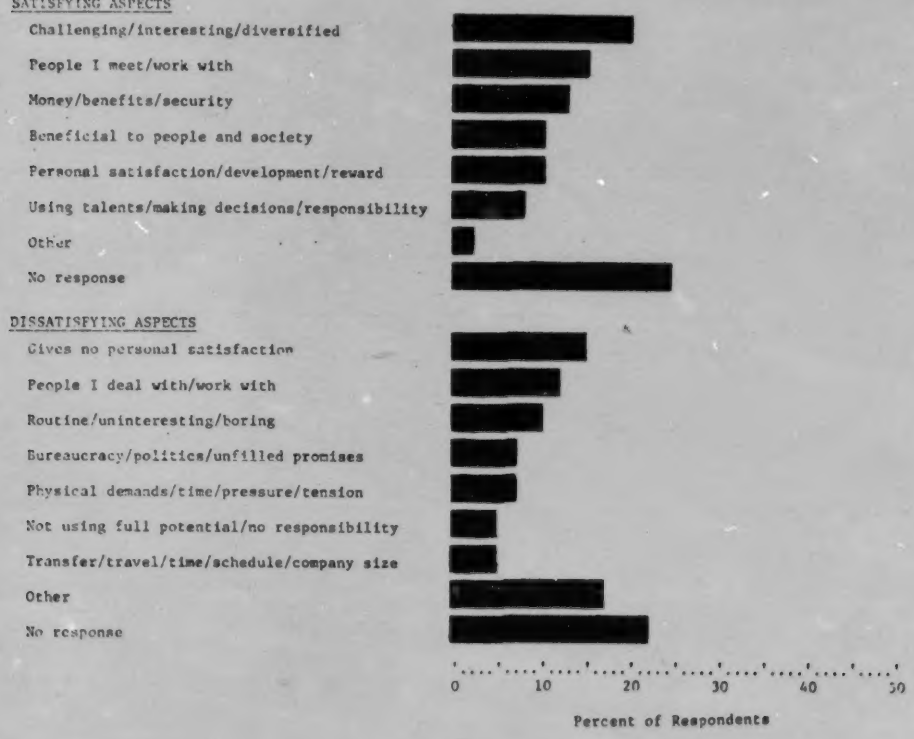
I love my job and most of the people I work with. I'm very pleased with my salary, the location; benefits (they feed us lunch for $5 a month) and my room for advancement. My only complaint is I must force myself to get along with the person with whom I work the most closely.

My job is very routine and boring. It is only satisfying in that every two weeks I get a pay check. The atmosphere is dissatisfying as the girls are cut-throats and totally unscientific. I keep to myself as much as possible.

Not only do I like the financial benefits of being a P.T., but I also like working closely with people who can benefit from my services. It is disappointing to see the results of shortages of professional physical therapists.

Figure 3.4 SATISFYING AND DISSATISFYING ASPECTS OF JOB N=41

(Proportions are based on the number of respondents who were employed in 1971, N=41)



Dissatisfying Aspects of Work

Several dissatisfying aspects of work were reported, none of them by more than fifteen percent of the sample. A number of respondents complained that they felt no sense of personal satisfaction in their work or reported dissatisfaction with the people with whom they worked. Others said that their jobs were routine, boring, or frustrating because of bureaucracy, the physical demands, the necessity of travel or transfer, or their own feeling of not living up to personal potential. A few reported that they had no job-related dissatisfactions. Others, many of whom had expressed positive feelings about their jobs, did not mention any dissatisfying aspects of their work.

My job is okay - it passes the time and it's not too taxing. Some of the people about me (my boss included), command no respect and for that reason the job is very dissatisfying. But I make good money and name my own hours.

I like it more than the office jobs I've held. I love working with living things rather than pieces of paper. I am frustrated by my own lack of knowledge, the complacent incompetence of some of my co-workers, and the lack of funds which forces us to operate with insufficient supplies (soap, food for the animals, etc.). Of course, it's also frustrating not to receive a promotion, which my boss admits I deserve, only because of my sex.

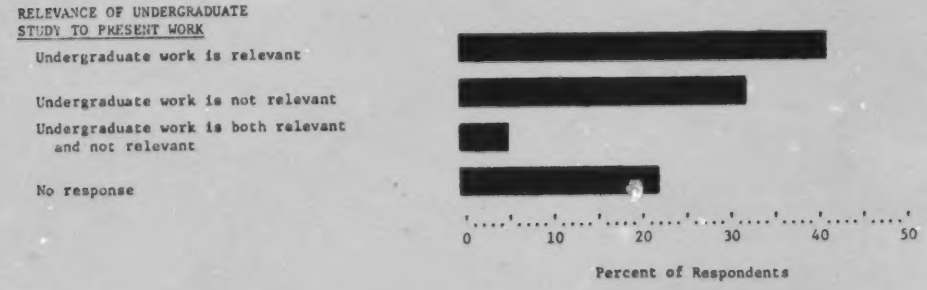
It is not satisfying. Therefore it dissatisfies me. I want to be left alone, but the Coast Guard had no openings in lighthouses.

RELEVANCE OF UNDERGRADUATE STUDY TO WORK

Regardless of whether or not respondents had completed a baccalaureate or were working in professional positions, they were asked to describe the relevance of their undergraduate experience to the work they were doing (Figure 3.5). Two-fifths of the respondents said that it was relevant while a third reported that it was not. Twenty-two percent did not respond to the question, including nearly two-thirds of those who had not received a bachelor's degree.

Figure 3.5 RELEVANCE OF UNDERGRADUATE STUDY TO WORK N=41

(Proportions are based on the number of respondents who were employed in 1971, N=41)



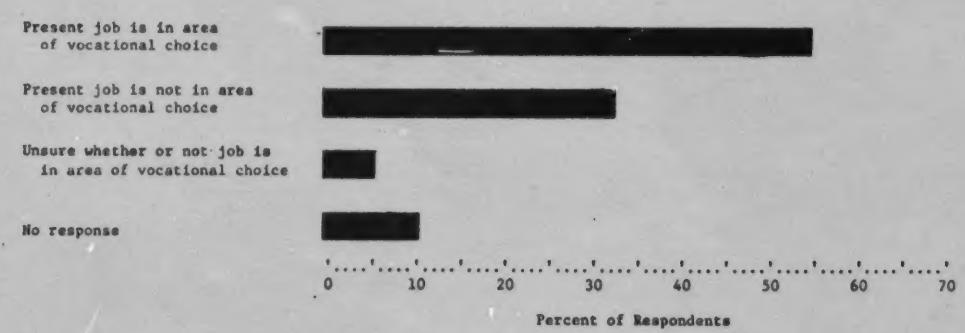
Relevance of undergraduate work to employment seemed to be related to respondents' feelings about their jobs. Fifty-nine percent of those who expressed positive feelings and a third of those who said their jobs were okay or all right stated that they were working in jobs for which their undergraduate work was relevant.

PRESENT WORK AND PREFERRED VOCATIONAL AREA

A separate but related question concerned whether or not members of the sample were working in the vocational area they preferred (Figure 3.6). More than half of the employed respondents indicated that they were, while a third said they were not. Three-fifths of those who had earned a baccalaureate and two-fifths of those who had not, said they were working in the job area they preferred. Not surprisingly, those who were working in the job area of their choice were more likely than others to have reported positive feelings about their jobs.

Figure 3.6 PRESENT JOB AND AREA OF VOCATIONAL CHOICE N=41

(Proportions are based on the number of respondents who were employed in 1971, N=41)



REALIZATION OF VOCATIONAL PLANS

Respondents were asked whether or not their vocational plans had been realized during the previous year. The majority said that they had. Two-fifths of the group had found jobs during the year. Some were still in school working toward advanced degrees which they thought would lead to better jobs, while others had not intended to be employed and were not.

> *Yes. Maybe I'm complacent but I like my job well enough that I'm not anxious to leave it.*

> *Yes. I am teaching a developmental physical educational program for kindergarten and first grade children in* (city, state). *I am quite happy with my job. It is exactly the kind of job that I was looking for and consider myself quite lucky to have gotten such a position. It is a good school system with well qualified personnel and good facilities and equipment.*

> *Yes. My only plans are to work at my library job and save up $2000+. When this is accomplished I split for London and Spain to live a life of selfish luxury, indolence, sensual gratification, and to develop strength of character in a healthy atmosphere.*

Twenty-eight percent said that their vocational plans had not been realized during the year. They reported that they were not prepared for work, that they were fulfilling a military obligation, that deserved advancement had not come, that they had a job but were not happy with it, or that they didn't know what they wanted to do. One woman had postponed her vocational plans to have a baby. A tenth didn't respond to the question.

> *No. I would have liked to start working but there was very little I could do, using my education. I feel this is because I made the wrong choice of majors at U/B, but I have only myself to blame for this.*

No. I was happily working as a mailman this summer when the Army Reserves called me up for four months of active duty.
(Feeling) *Terrible.*
The Army refused to accept my suggestion that they disband or alternatively become carrot farmers.

No. Had hoped to be promoted from Seasonal Park Helper to Zoo Keeper. Promotion is at Supervisor's discretion. Supervisor told me that it is nothing personal, but he doesn't want any more female keepers because "they are a distraction".

I'm disappointed and infuriated. He has no right to inflect his personal prejudices on me. I plan to seek legal help to insure that I am promoted. Even though I'll have to leave in September for school, I want to prove to him that he can't get away with it.

CHANGES IN VOCATIONAL GOALS

Each year since the initiation of the longitudinal project the sample had been asked whether or not their ultimate vocational goals had changed during the preceding year. In 1971 more than two-thirds replied that they had not, while nearly a quarter indicated that they had. A few reported that experience in the field had contributed to a change or that their own personal development and maturity had lead them to their new goal.

Last year I couldn't see myself working in any straight area. I thought that change had to come from outside and by working within the system I'd become part of the problem. Now that I've totally convinced myself that violent revolution is impossible I'm able to accept the slow changes that come through education.

Last year I didn't know what I wanted. The change was influenced by my own thinking and being on my own. I am very pleased. I have always done what everyone else wanted me to do because of an inferiority complex. Now I do what I please, and it's like a great weight had been lifted from my shoulders.

Most of those who said that their ultimate vocational goal had changed during the year were employed in 1971. Those who were completing undergraduate work or pursuing advanced degrees generally had made no change.

OBSERVATIONS

Two groups seem to emerge when the responses of this sample are compared, although there are many exceptions to these groupings.

One group, made up primarily of women and a few commuter men who had completed their degrees and had not been in school during the year, were working as full-time professionals in jobs for which they had trained and which they enjoyed. Many of these were teachers or social workers. The second group, primarily men and some resident women, had been in school during the year and were working in non-professional jobs which they saw as unrelated to their educational experiences and outside of their preferred vocational area, and from which they derived little satisfaction. Changes in educational and vocational plans are likely as further education is required for career advancement, as more women leave the work force to rear families and as those in advanced academic programs complete their degrees and pursue careers.

CHAPTER 4

INTERESTS, SOCIETAL CONCERNS, AND LEISURE ACTIVITIES

Each year throughout the longitudinal project, questions about interests and leisure activities have been asked. The responses provide data for the investigation of changes which occur and factors which influence those changes. Additionally, common characteristics of group members in terms of types of activities or interests and degree of involvement in them can be studied. In 1971, the midpoint of the project, the members of the sample were asked about their concern and involvement in societal issues as well as their current pursuit of interests developed during 1966-1970, new interests which engaged them during 1970-1971, and leisure activities.

INTERESTS

Interests Developed During the Period 1966-1970

In response to the question, *What, if any, interests were you pursuing this year that you developed during the period 1966-1970*, interests in the fine arts and the intellectual domain were most frequently reported. These together accounted for two-fifths of the responses (Figure 4.1).

> *Art - seeing art exhibits - general interest in arts - music - poetry, etc. - dance.*

> *The study of the history and philosophy of science, the study of mythology.*

Socializing was the next most frequently mentioned interest, referred to by seventeen percent of the group.

> *I'm still a cinema fan, enjoy meeting people; political participation - again, nothing really special.*

Figure 4.1 INTERESTS PURSUED IN 1971 WHICH WERE DEVELOPED DURING THE PERIODS 1966 TO 1970 AND 1970 TO 1971 N=64

Single people reported continuing interest developed during the 1966 to 1970 period in sports and social action, with men reporting sports interests and women indicating interest in social action. Fewer than ten percent of the respondents reported each of several additional interests and hobbies.

Skiing, reading science fiction.

Social awareness - poverty and politics.

Photography, antiques, skiing.

Arts and crafts - knitting, embroidering, hooking rugs, making collages.

A tenth of the respondents reported that they were not pursuing any interests developed during the years 1966 to 1970.

Interests Developed During 1970-1971

What, if any, interests have you developed during the past year? If a respondent indicated a new interest in an area already cited as a previous interest, that area was reported in both categories. For example, one who continued his interest in swimming might have developed a new interest in golf. Sports would then be reported as a new interest as well as a previously developed one for that individual.

Intellectual interests including reading, writing, learning about and discussing current problems, headed the list of new interests, followed by professional or vocational considerations.

> *More awareness of the world and its problems. Maybe more so because I'm working and come face to face with the outside world.*

> *Wider scope in literature and non-fiction; camping, oil painting.*

> *My interests in my future involvement in my profession have increased in the last year.*

The fine arts, sports, religion, and philosophy were new interests for fewer than ten percent of the respondents.

> *Legal field, participatory sports (basketball, volleyball), vocabulary improvement, outside reading.*

> *Countless. But above all an interest in men, movies, rock music, Chinese and Japanese and Tibetan art and religion.*

A variety of other interests were mentioned by five percent or fewer of the respondents. Seventeen percent of the sample reported that they had developed no new interests in the last year, many observing that they were pursuing previous interests.

No new interests except the interior decorating which my apartment required and I thoroughly enjoyed.

I haven't developed any new interests, but have become more involved in my old one - Physical Therapy.

Old and New Interests

Three of the five most frequently mentioned areas appear as both new interests and interests developed during 1966 to 1970, and include fine arts, intellectual interests and sports.

Overall, about the same proportion of respondents reported pursuing both previously and newly developed interests. However, men generally, and married ones in particular, were more likely to report pursuing recent than earlier interests. Women in general, but especially single women, were more likely to report involvement in interests previously developed than in newer ones. A quarter of those who had been commuters as entering freshmen mentioned pursuit of neither previously nor recently developed interests, while all but one of the former residents cited at least one interest. At a later date, these data will be considered in relation to interests already developed by the group when they entered SUNY/B in 1966.

SOCIETAL CONCERNS AND SOCIAL ACTION

The members of the sample were asked about present societal concerns as well as those of previous years.

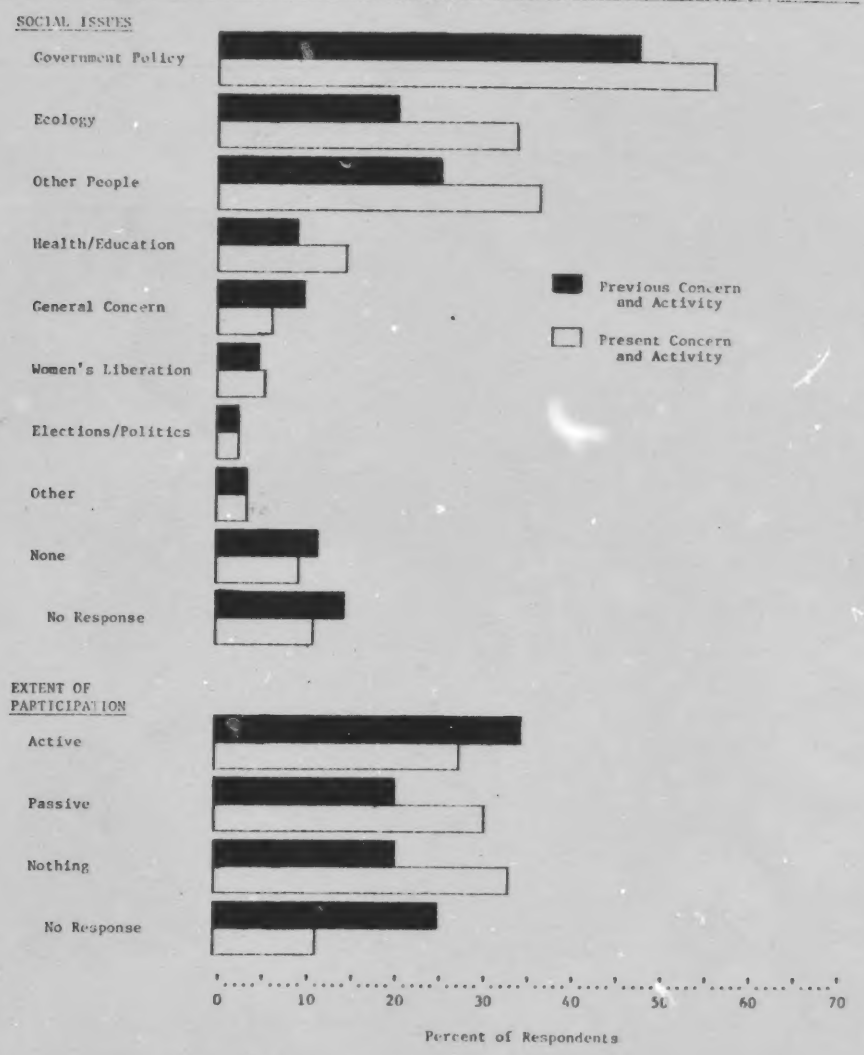
Most of the 1966 freshmen were at the University during the activist period of the late 1960's. A few were participants, others observers; in retrospect, most cited interest in some societal problem during their college years and since.

Previous Social Concerns

What, if any, social issues were you concerned about previous to this year? What, if anything, did you do in regard to your concern? In response to these open-ended questions, members of the group could cite as many social

issues as they chose. Three-quarters of the group reported at least one (Figure 4.2).

Table 4.2 . SOCIAL ISSUES PRESENTLY AND PREVIOUSLY OF CONCERN TO RESPONDENTS; EXTENT OF PARTICIPATION IN SOCIAL ACTION N=64



Most frequently reported were issues having to do with government policy, particularly the war in Vietnam, but including as well the draft, inflation, and unemployment.

Vietnam - invasion of Cambodia and Laos.

The war in Vietnam, pollution, changing role of education.

The War, personal freedom, anti-scientism, dehumanization, racial and religious bigotry, environment, legalization of marijuana, education, health.

A quarter of the group expressed concern for the plight of other people with respect to poverty, disadvantaged and hungry children, and discrimination.

Primarily the racism and chauvinism of our society which leads to the genocide of people of color at home and in Southeast Asia.

Poverty and ghetto children and their lack of good education.

Such ecological problems as environmental pollution and overpopulation were expressed concerns of twenty percent of the respondents.

Overpopulation, war, ecology, politics.

Vietnam war, pollution, alienation.

Environment, peace.

Unspecified social concern was mentioned by fewer than a tenth of the sample, as were health and education-related issues, women's liberation, and politics. Over a tenth of the respondents reported that they had not been concerned with any societal issues in previous years, and fourteen percent did not respond to the question.

Hopefully, most. Unfortunately I took much less action than I would have liked.

One or two lines or pages or books would not be enough to tell about all of the social issues that I felt should be corrected.

None, I was too wrapped up in myself.

Extent of Participation in Previous Social Concerns

When asked what action they had taken in relation to their previous concerns, a third of the respondents reported active participation through demonstration, letter writing, or other political or social action.

> *I began by doing draft counseling, but realized that the people I was aiding were mainly white middle-class students. Then I did community organizing concentrating on high school students, to create an awareness of social issues.*

> *I tutored in a program for ghetto children.*

> *I marched, I demonstrated, I called the police "Pig," I went on strike, I wore buttons - how little we really did change.*

Twenty percent described such passive behavior as informing themselves about the issues and discussing them with others.

> *Talked to my parents and relatives so they could hear another viewpoint. Took education courses that were discussion groups, not just lecture-type.*

> *I read, I talked with people, I voted according to how I feel.*

A fifth of the sample indicated that they had taken no action relative to their concerns. A similar proportion did not respond to the question.

Present Social Concerns

What, if any, social issues are you concerned about this year? What, if anything, did you do this year in regard to your concern? More than eighty percent of the group named at least one social issue that concerned them in 1970-1971. Over half of the respondents reported concerns related to government policy, particularly the war in Vietnam, but additionally inflation, unemployment, and other matters of proposed legislation or regulation were mentioned.

> *Censorship, war, politics, religion, campus unrest.*

> *Poverty and politics. The war and discrimination against students and the young.*

Unemployment and inflation.

War in Vietnam, better medical care for the poor, educational changes.

Two-fifths of the sample reported current concern for ecological issues including pollution and overpopulation.

Cancer research, the War, pollution, overpopulation.

Still growing wasteful rape of world to support our bubblegum and tinfoil economy.

I am deeply concerned with over pollution and the results of the U.S. involvement in S.E. Asia.

Thirty-six percent mentioned concern with the plight of other people, particularly those facing poverty or discrimination, and fourteen percent were concerned about health and education-related problems.

Pollution, plight of deprived persons, state of this country, fate of university education.

Problems concerning the adolescent because I work with them and have become more concerned.

Health care for the poor, the need for an optimal health care delivery system.

Several other issues, including women's liberation and politics, were cited by individuals or small groups of respondents. Very few said they were concerned with no social issues, or did not respond to the question.

Extent of Participation in Present Social Concerns

When asked what they had done in relation to their societal concerns during the year, over a quarter of the respondents reported active involvement.

Thought, read and wrote paper, looking for new tactics. Also got very anxious about how one might translate his ideals into action upon leaving the SUNYAB womb. I also signed a few petitions and the People's Peace Treaty with Vietnam.

Working on committee concerned with drug abuse.

Recycling bottles, using no-phosphate detergents, using white tissues, napkins, etc. (totally degradable in water).

Passive response to their concerns was reported by thirty percent of the group.

Gave my feelings and convictions to anyone who would listen.

Read articles about overpopulation, am taking an oral contraceptive. When I am settled I would like to work as a volunteer for Cancer Research.

I attended a lecture by Ralph Nader and I read all I can in the field of pollution and population control.

A third of the sample, especially the men, reported no participation in action relative to their social concerns during the past year.

Nothing, just complain with fellow workers.

What can be done??!!

Comparison - New and Old Social Concerns

More respondents named more social issues that concerned them in 1971 than concerned them previously. Three issues - government policy, ecology, and the welfare of other people - dominated both time periods.

Because of the relatively high no-response rate to the question of participation in social issues that were previously of concern to respondents, it

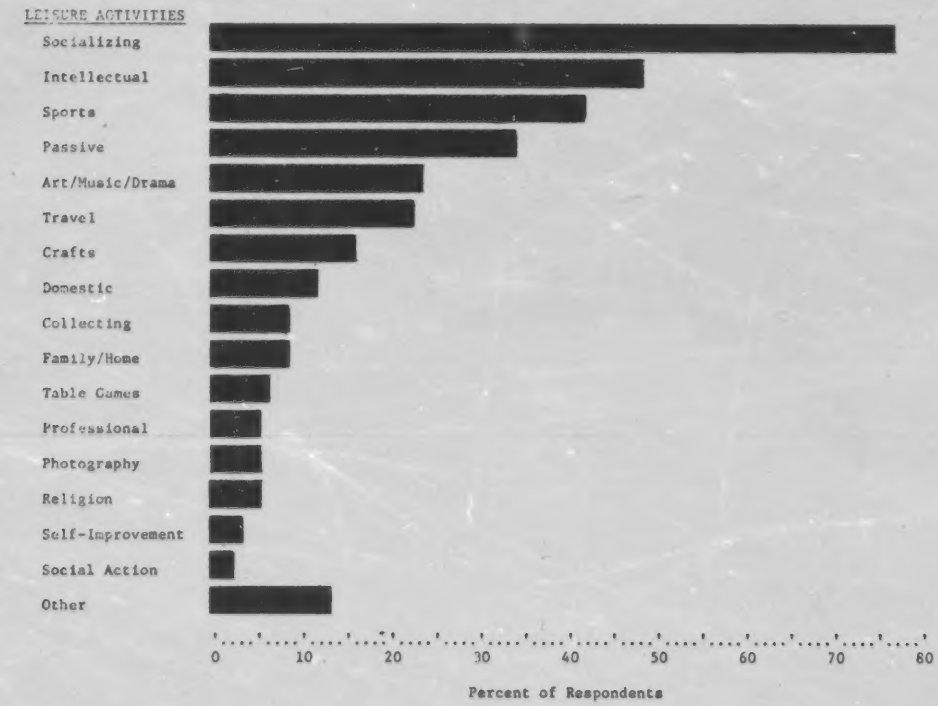
is difficult to cite patterns in participation over time. However, it appears that the group more often responded passively or not at all to concerns in 1971 than they had during the period 1966 to 1970, even though they cited a greater number of social issues in 1971. It seems as though their involvement in establishing homes, careers, and/or postgraduate study took precedence over their involvement in societal issues at that time in their lives.

LEISURE ACTIVITIES

In addition to new and previous interests and societal concerns, respondents were asked to describe their leisure activities. Everyone reported at least one leisure activity, and some mentioned six or seven, with an average response of about three (Figure 4.3).

Of the many activities in which respondents participated in their leisure time, mentioned most often was socializing with friends, fellow students, co-workers or spouses.

Figure 4.3 LEISURE ACTIVITIES N=64



With my fiance, usually cleaning our new house.

Thinking - at this point, I have little leisure time - most of my time is spent doing art work - leisure time I have usually spent with friends - i.e. dinner parties and T.V. watching.

Almost half the sample, primarily women, referred to intellectual pursuits among their leisure activities.

I'm taking two adult ed. courses at the New School - in graphology and the theatre; go to movies, TV shows, plays, ballet; meet friends; travel; read; faint.

Dates, art class, orchestra rehearsals, reading, painting, writing, girlfriends, ice-skating.

Two-fifths of the group reported involvement in sports, either as observers or participants.

I have always enjoyed all sports (basketball, baseball, skiing, etc.) Like to be with friends and make new ones at any opportunity.

Skiing, running, ping pong, movies, basketball, reading, T.V., talking, eating, drinking, rock music.

A third of the group mentioned passive behavior such as television viewing or sunbathing.

I like to spend my leisure time, of which there is always feast or famine, doing what I consider to be "doing nothing," that is, listening to music, getting high - you know, just 'messin' around.

Just relaxing, watching T.V. or listening to radio or reading. Our dorm is quite isolated from the University and weather conditions as they are in central N.Y., most of us stay in the dorm during leisure hours.

Leisure activities related to music and the fine arts were pursued by a quarter of the respondents.

> *I play the piano, enjoy outdoor sports, and am active in my church. I also enjoy concerts and movies.*

> *I take photographs and develop the pictures and make prints. I also ride a bicycle for relaxation. I'm now studying yoga.*

Travel was a leisure activity of over a fifth of the group.

> *Travel, skiing, playing cards, shows, etc.*

> *Sports, working on my car, take trips.*

Crafts and domestic undertakings such as cooking and furniture refinishing were cited almost exclusively by women.

> *I really don't have much leisure time. I am working full time and going to college part time. But I like to relax by seeing a movie or reading a good mystery or science fiction novel. I am also in the process of setting up a hamster colony. I knit occasionally and I dabble in fancy cooking. In the summer I like to go camping and horseback riding.*

A variety of other leisure-time pursuits were mentioned by smaller proportions of the sample.

> *I enjoy many hobbies, tropical fish, hunting, fishing, and collecting stamps and antique guns.*

> *In the winter I ski as often as I can. I also travel to Buffalo where my girlfriend still goes to school. I collect antiques and that keeps me busy travelling around.*

> *During the past year, I have had more leisure time than in the past, since while I was in college, I was also working part time. I have become more active in community projects, as well as in activities pertaining to my work.*

OBSERVATIONS

Responses of sex, marital status, and residence subgroups seemed to differ with respect to their interests and concerns.

Men were more likely to report interests and leisure activities developed between 1966 and 1970 than were women. Men also were more likely than women to report no societal interests developed either previously or currently, and to cite no previous societal concerns. On the other hand, men more often than women mentioned previous concern with matters of government policy, notably the war, and reported having been actively involved in attempts to change these conditions. Women more frequently than men reported having developed an interest in social action during the years from 1966 to 1970, an interest which seems to have continued and to be reflected in women's more active participation in social action in 1971. Although they shared a number of concerns with men, they more often than men expressed concern for ecological problems in previous years and were more likely than men to report current ecological concerns.

Residents named more interests and leisure pursuits developed during the period from 1966 to 1970 than did the commuters, although they were less likely to name ones developed in 1970 to 1971. Among their leisure pursuits, intellectual activities were more frequently cited by residents than by commuters. Residents were more involved in societal concerns both in previous years and in 1971 than were commuters, naming more issues with which they were concerned and reporting more active participation in attempts at social change. A quarter of the commuters failed to respond to the questions related to interest and societal concerns. Those who did respond reported more interests developed in 1970 to 1971 than did the residents. Forty-six percent said that they had not participated in attempts to change societal conditions during the present year, compared to fifteen percent of the residents.

CHAPTER 5

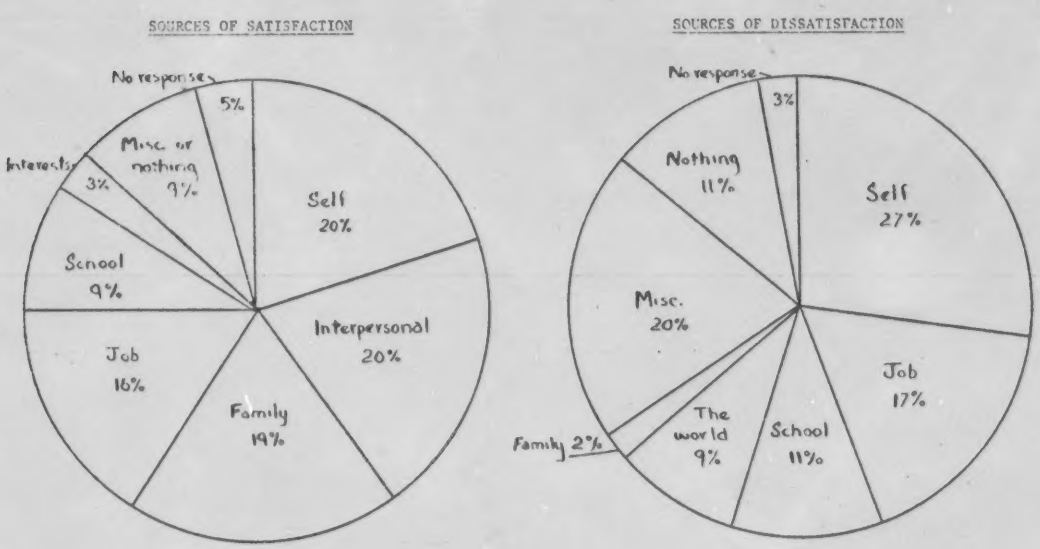
PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT AND PERSPECTIVES

Several questions are asked each year of the longitudinal study concerning personal development and perspectives of the respondents. In 1971 the sample was asked to describe the source of their greatest satisfaction and of their greatest dissatisfaction over the previous year, what had been most difficult for them to cope with, what personal changes they had undergone, and what ones they would like to effectuate, how they felt about themselves and how the year had differed from their expectations.

SOURCE OF GREATEST SATISFACTION

A variety of sources of satisfaction were reported, clustering in areas of self-development, family and other interpersonal relationships, and job or career (Figure 5.1). Self-related satisfactions were reported by a fifth of

Figure 5.1 SOURCES OF GREATEST SATISFACTION AND DISSATISFACTION N=64



the respondents, and included self-development, adjustment, and broader satisfactions derived from experiencing life on individual terms.

> *Seeing how I've changed and progressed and become more independent - getting closer to both vocational and personal goals.*

> *I feel I'm becoming more of an adult in taking on responsibility for my own decisions and their consequences.*

> *I have been talking about some aspects of my life with a friend of mine (a minister). In the course of these conversations I have come to a very strong sense of self-identity.*

> *Straightening out my head and my life. These are the things that are most important in a time of uncertainty and growing dread.*

Twenty percent of the group cited interpersonal relationships as sources of their greatest satisfaction. Love relationships were most often mentioned, but the desire to help people, the joy of new friendships and increased self-confidence in interpersonal skills were mentioned as well.

> *My girlfriend and our relationships, friends.*

> *Getting on good terms with my parents. For two years I avoided seeing them, and it hanged over my head. I didn't like feeling that they disapproved of me, but I had to break away, too.*

> *Without a doubt the most satisfaction I have obtained has been from my girl and work. They compliment each other and one would be no good without the other.*

Satisfaction derived from family relationships was described by another fifth of the sample. Most of these respondents were married men and women who spoke of happiness with their marriages and/or children.

Watching and helping my family grow.

Having a baby - seeing him grow and develop and seeing my love grow for him.

Being able to have a satisfying relationship with my wife. This has more than anything else this past year allowed me to function most successfully.

Career-related sources of satisfaction were reported by sixteen percent of the respondents. More specifically, career development, making of career decisions, and the rewards, benefits and security of a job were mentioned. A tenth of the group said that their greatest satisfaction came from the year's academic achievements. These men and women explained that they had received good grades, passed important examinations or completed their studies.

Learning that I know I can succeed in my chosen profession.

Successfully accomplishing my job. I have now lost many of the fears I had previously, on not being able to make it in the work world in opposition to the academic world where I had always succeeded.

I think getting the best grade in my 5 years here this past fall gave me great satisfaction because of the difficulties I had had gradewise during my first 3 1/2 years of college. Getting to know my professors better this year has also been very satisfying.

My performance in school - I am doing well in graduate school whereas in undergrad I had a great deal of difficulty.

A variety of unique responses appeared as well.

My trip to Europe and the Middle East - it was just so exciting and I learned so much about people, countries and myself.

Buying a house. It gave me the satisfaction that I really am successful and that college wasn't a waste.

Learning how to play the guitar, because it's a self-induced pleasure rather than an ingested one. Because it takes the edge off my increasingly volatile disposition. Because it restores some continuity to my life, and because it makes no claims to truth.

SOURCE OF GREATEST DISSATISFACTION

Over a quarter of the group reported that some self-related condition produced their greatest dissatisfaction during the year. Included were concern for their ability to find friends and love relationships, lack of motivation, a feeling of not having accomplished enough, and frustration at their lack of goals or direction. This group was dominated by women.

I still tend to wait around, expecting external forces to shape my life. Rationally, I know this can't be, but it's a bit more difficult to act on.

Because it's taking me so long to grow up. Because I can never adjust to things quickly. Because at heart I feel like a little kid - a scared little kid. Because I am not the person I would like to be and I don't know what I want to be.

I often feel I should be able to do a better job than I'm doing in relating to others and making myself the kind of person I would like to be.

The source of greatest dissatisfaction for seventeen percent of the group was job related. Some members cited dissatisfaction with the work itself while others referred to trouble involving co-workers or supervisors. A tenth of the respondents mentioned academic sources of frustration including the content of classes, academic requirements, and fellow students.

The most dissatisfaction has derived from my job, from the fact that I have been so disappointed in the situation. And there is so little I can do about it at this point, that it is very, very frustrating.

My job - I've learned that politics run this department. People are promoted because of who they know, not because of their qualifications.

College - I'm very confused right now. I don't know what to major in.

My education - it's just boring and really a waste of time. However, to achieve my final goal I'll have to stick out the year.

As stated before, I find the routine of Dental School to be quite unstimulating intellectually. It seems as if this is the way that the school wants it to be rather than have their students think.

The state of the world in general had caused greatest dissatisfaction for a tenth of the respondents and a variety of other sources of dissatisfaction were described by a fifth of the sample.

I am dissatisfied by the racism and prejudice which we have experienced attempting to give equal opportunity to all, and by the direction in which this country is headed under its present leadership.

The "sickness" of those I feel are my brothers; growing fears, overt pessimism, things that are shown by the tangible evidence of such things as the heroin epidemic.

Eleven percent reported that there was no great dissatisfaction in their lives over the previous year.

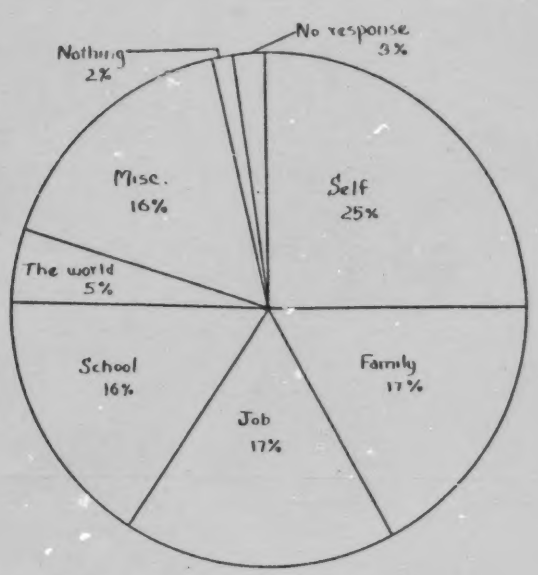
What's to be dissatisfied with?

MOST DIFFICULT PROBLEM TO COPE WITH

Respondents were asked what had been most difficult for them to cope with during the previous year and how successful they had been in coping (Figure 5.2). As with sources of satisfaction and dissatisfaction, responses generally

clustered around a few concerns, especially self development, jobs or careers, family relationships, and school.

Figure 5.2 MOST DIFFICULT PROBLEM TO COPE WITH N=64



A quarter of the sample reported that some concern relating to their personal lives or individual development had been most difficult for them to cope with during the previous year. These problems included concern for friendship and love, dissatisfaction with their ability to develop or to live up to previously set goals, and feelings of not having accomplished enough during the year. Women dominated this response group.

> *The most difficult thing with which I had to cope was learning to stand on my own two feet. For too long I've tried to please everyone. It isn't easy to break away from old habits. I feel I've been fairly successful.*

> *Learning, for the first time, to apply self-discipline. Well, it's not easy, but I've been doing many more of the things I know I should, than I've ever done without an outside push. It's easier to do once you find a goal.*

My biggest problem is a real lack of goal. People constantly ask "When are you getting married?" "What are you going to be?" etc., when in truth I barely know what I'll be doing next month, let alone next year.

Seventeen percent said that family-centered concerns had been most difficult for them to deal with. Among these were poor relationships with parents, difficulty adjusting to marriage or parenthood, or concern for the welfare of a spouse, child or parent.

The most difficult thing to cope with has been my relationship with my parents. I feel I have been fairly successful.

Winter blues and being stuck in house because of baby. Moderately successful in keeping busy.

Marriage - quite successful.

Another seventeen percent of the group stated that some aspect of their jobs was most difficult to cope with, citing either the type work required or the people with whom they worked.

My job and its politics. I'm afraid I haven't been very successful.

I think the first month on my new job was really the most difficult for me. I had to learn new procedures and this in itself can be difficult. I feel I was very successful for I am now working a whole section of the lab on my own.

The frustrations of 40 wasted hours a week, smiling over gnashed teeth, being friendly to those I don't like, and generally making an ass of myself in the face of all I believe. What is hardest to cope with is the rage that gnaws at me as a result. I haven't been fired, I've never struck first in the subway and I haven't made my friends and wife despair of me. Otherwise I've failed at coping with that rage.

Sixteen percent of the sample, all single men, cited academic problems, most concerning the time it was taking to complete degrees or the content of their program or courses. A few men mentioned the Army or the frustration of not having enough money. For a few, their living arrangements or the state of the world in general had been most difficult for them to cope with during the year.

> *Doing the work required for school constantly. I feel pretty successful.*
>
> *ARMY and MYSELF. I'm very bitter now - I just hope when I get out I can be more understanding.*
>
> *A personal financial squeeze. I think I've got it licked.*
>
> *My most difficulty this year has been with my suddenly living home again after 4 years of being away. It involved my accepting again typical parent-child affairs when it should be parent-man affairs. I think I have gained an understanding of my parents that has enabled me to cope with this.*

WAYS RESPONDENTS HAD CHANGED

The men and women in the sample were asked, *In what, if any, ways have you changed this year?* The vast majority responded that they had undergone some changes (Figure 5.3). The most frequent response reported by twenty-eight percent of the group referred to increased self-confidence, control, discipline, or satisfaction. The single women dominated this response group.

> *I think I have become more confident in my abilities not only in work but in dealing with other people. I have made many friends who accept me for what I am and this makes me very happy.*
>
> *I'm a bit more confident in myself. I'm becoming more in touch with my feelings, motivations, than ever.*

Figure 5.3 WAYS RESPONDENTS HAD CHANGED N=64

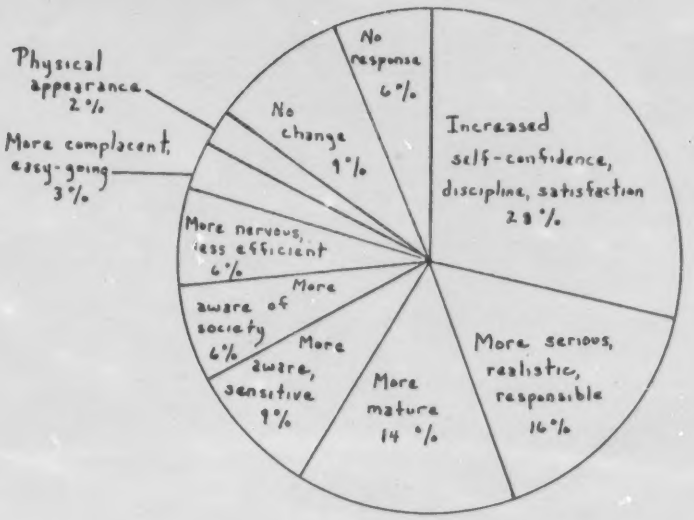
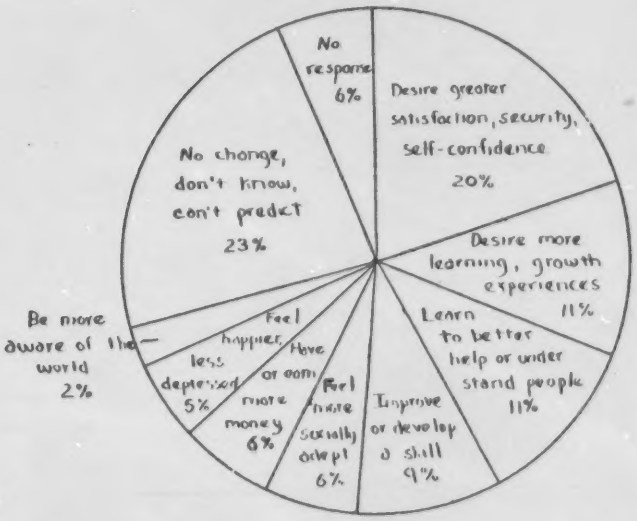

Physical appearance 2%
More complacent, easy-going 3%
No response 6%
No change 9%
Increased self-confidence, discipline, satisfaction 28%
More nervous, less efficient 6%
More aware of society 6%
More aware, sensitive 9%
More mature 14%
More serious, realistic, responsible 16%

Figure 5.4 WAYS RESPONDENTS WOULD LIKE TO CHANGE N=45


No response 6%
Desire greater satisfaction, security, self-confidence 20%
No change, don't know, can't predict 23%
Desire more learning, growth experiences 11%
Be more aware of the world 2%
Feel happier, less depressed 5%
Have or earn more money 6%
Feel more sexually adept 6%
Improve or develop a skill 9%
Learn to better help or understand people 11%

Thirty percent indicated that they felt either more serious, realistic, responsible or more mature.

> *I think I have become more serious, more sensitive to feelings of others and more insightful about the actions of others.*

> *I have become much more independent and willing to depend on myself rather than foist my responsibilities on others. I like to feel I am finally making the transition from child to adult.*

> *I'm older, a little wiser, hopefully more mature.*

Most responses were positive in nature, reflecting increased feelings of independence and competence on the part of the respondents. However, some members of the group reported becoming more nervous, less efficient and less trusting of others. A few, all of whom had attended school during the year, reported that they had not changed.

WAYS RESPONDENTS WOULD LIKE TO CHANGE

During the first interview of the project in the fall of 1966, members of the group were asked how they would like to change during college,[1] a question that elicited an astonishing variety of responses. In 1971, midway in the ten-year project, respondents were asked *In what, if any, ways would you like to change during the next five years?* Seventy percent expressed a desire for some change (Figure 5.4). Most frequently mentioned, by twenty percent of the group, was the desire to feel more satisfaction, security, or confidence in one's self, a response which closely resembles the most frequent response of the initial sample five years earlier.

> *Obtain a definite feeling of security (good job and have a good wife and home) to definitely "know where I am going" (something I haven't really felt since high school and that has all changed in the past 5 years).*

---

[1] Kubiniec, p. 60.

I'd like to become more outgoing - be able to live with myself - be more satisfied with myself. Stop running away and just accept myself for what I am and be happy.

I would like to be able to do something that would make me feel more satisfied. I don't really think I would like to change.

Become more confident of myself and my actions.

The desire for more learning and growth experience was expressed by eleven percent of the group, as was a desire to better understand and help other people. Similarly, in 1966, the second most frequent group of responses reflected a desire to be *more educated, informed, widely read, experienced, articulate, better able to apply knowledge.*[2]

It's hard to conceive of 5 years of change when things are happening so rapidly (mentally) now. It's hard to think past one year. All I hope is that I never stop growing.

I wouldn't want to change too much except for being able to understand people better.

A tenth of the 1971 respondents indicated a desire to improve a skill or acquire a new one.

I'd like to develop and educate myself so that I have a skill to offer.

Increase my vocabulary, become more forceful.

I would like to change my golf swing - to be slower, more deliberate backswing and a better shift in weight to initiate downswing. Otherwise I am not worried or concerned about changing an otherwise self-content personality.

---

[2] Ibid.

A few wished to feel more socially secure or adept.

> *More at ease in large groups - especially groups of acquaintances, not friends.*

A quarter of the group reported that they didn't wish to change, or didn't know how they wanted to change, or couldn't predict what changes would take place.

> *If I've said it once I've said it more than once: if I knew something about myself that I wanted to change I would try to do it right now.*

Some cited very specific desires for change.

> *I would like to be able to make major decisions without getting a headache.*

One expressed wishes worthy of Walter Mitty.

> *I should like to become very beautiful, funny in conversation, learned in the art of poetry, and more aesthetically cultivated in the Arts of the Orient. I would like to be an enlightened person; a movie star; a great poetess, the life of every party.*

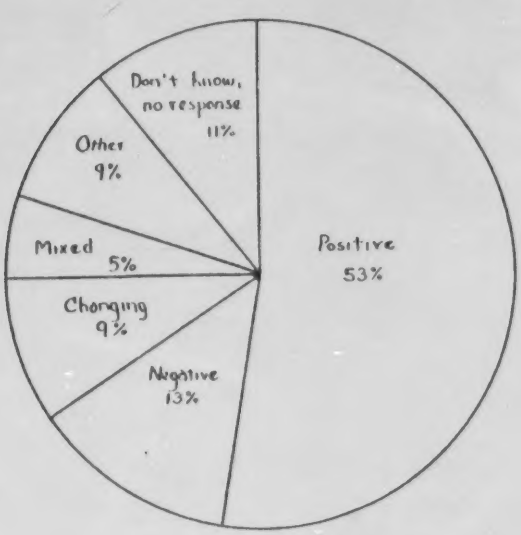
FEELINGS ABOUT SELF

When asked what one word best described their feelings about themselves, a question which had been asked for three years previously, over half of the respondents gave clearly positive responses including, *content, satisfied, good, happy, self-assured* and *fine* (Figure 5.5).

Negative responses, such as *disgusted, insecure* or *dissatisfied* were expressed by thirteen percent of the group, all but one of whom were single.

Nine percent reported dynamic feelings about themselves, such as *seeking, maturing, evolving* or *growing* and a few others were ambivalent. A tenth failed to respond to the question.

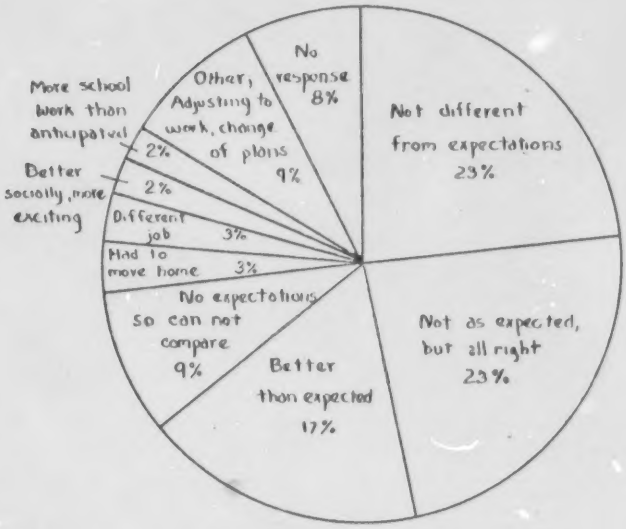
Figure 5.5 FEELINGS ABOUT SELF N=64



HOW THE YEAR DIFFERED FROM RESPONDENT EXPECTATIONS

In what ways was your life this year different from what you had expected it to be? Nearly a quarter of the group, twice as many men as women, responded that the year had not differed from their expectations (Figure 5.6).

Figure 5.6 HOW THE YEAR DIFFERED FROM RESPONDENT EXPECTATIONS N=64


No response 8%
Not different from expectations 23%
Other, Adjusting to work, change of plans 9%
More school work than anticipated 2%
Better socially, more exciting 2%
Different job 3%
Had to move home 3%
No expectations so can not compare 9%
Better than expected 17%
Not as expected, but all right 23%

It has come off exactly as planned. I'm glad about it - it's exactly what I wanted.

My life is what I expected it to be this year and am very much satisfied with it.

For another quarter of the sample, the year had not been what they had expected, but they were coping well with the differences.

I didn't expect to move back home but I did. It hasn't been as bad as I thought it would be perhaps because my family sees I'm 22 and old enough to live for myself.

I expected to be a sophisticated, urbanite going to dental school . . . instead I realize that what I thought I wanted to be I'm basically not, and so I'm settling in the mean time for the dental school, and I'll see if I'm sophisticated next year.

Well, I used to think that as soon as I did one thing, or fixed up what ever part of my life was messed up, that "everything would be together." I've learned that life is never what I expect it to be, that there are always some rough edges, but that it's okay, 'cause that's what it's all about.

For seventeen percent, the year had gone better than they had anticipated.

I never expected to be where I am now or doing what I'm doing! I'm really excited, I feel like I've come a long ways. That I have matured a great deal.

It is better this year than I expected. I am going to Spain, I shall augment the feeling of exhileration I've felt thus far about my life being freer than ever. I've had better friends than ever. I am older and much wiser in one year than one year "normally" allows for.

I expected to be living in a rut. I am not. Each day brings excitement, challenge. Maybe it's just putting a new license plate on by myself or learning shorthand. But my life is full and rich and I'm happy.

I didn't think that I was going to be able to have time for anything other than study. As it is so far I am having a better social life than I did in undergrad school. I'm happy about it. Wouldn't you be?

Smaller numbers mentioned specific changes in their plans, and nine percent stated that they had no expectations so had no basis for comparison.

I thought I would be teaching English - I'm glad I'm not - I enjoy my work with retarded children much better.

Last year I expected myself to be doing full-time political work this year and living in a collective situation. I'm happy that I didn't do this since it has given me more time to re-evaluate myself and my goals and realize that everything I previously accepted wasn't completely correct.

This is a very difficult question for me to answer, since I was uncertain of just what I expected the past year to bring. I am basically satisfied with the changes which this year has brought about in my life.

I didn't actually expect it to be any different than it was. I really didn't know what to expect.

Overall, three-fifths of the group reported that the year was in some way different from what they had expected.

OBSERVATIONS

Responses of sex, marital status, and residence subgroups of respondents seemed to differ with respect to personal development and perspectives.

Women seem to have moved into new situations faster than men. They were quicker to marry, to complete undergraduate work, and to embark upon careers, although it should not be assumed that the women were more strongly career oriented, given the extended graduate and professional training, with its

career implications, more often undertaken by the men. Women reported concern about their self-development and saw themselves as changing, growing people who had become more self-confident during the year. More men, by contrast, were in school, and their responses reflect academic concerns. They reported, more often than women, that they had not changed during the year, that they harbored negative feelings about themselves, and that the year had gone much as they had anticipated if they indeed had any expectations.

The residents more often than commuters reported that they had matured during the year. They were seeking more learning experiences in the future and expressed more positive feelings about themselves than did the commuters. The commuters were likely not to respond to the question about self-feelings, but reported more often than the residents that their greatest satisfaction during the year had come from their jobs or their academic pursuits.

CHAPTER 6

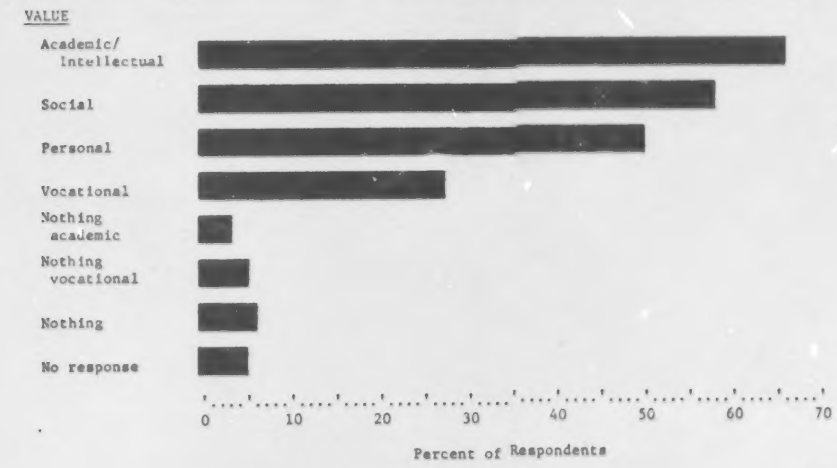
ASSESSMENT OF THE COLLEGE EXPERIENCE

Each year since the inception of the longitudinal study, participants have been asked to discuss the value of their undergraduate experience. The question has been phrased in different ways, and related questions have been asked from time to time concerning the *purpose* of college attendance, and ways in which the undergraduate experience could be made more *meaningful* to the student. In 1971, respondents were asked to describe in retrospect the overall value of their college experience, and ways in which that value might have been increased.

VALUES OF A COLLEGE EXPERIENCE

From your present perspective, what do you see as the value of your college experience - both academic and non-academic? In response to this question, social, personal, and vocational, as well as academic and intellectual considerations were reported, frequently in combination (Figure 6.1).

Table 6.1 VALUE OF THE COLLEGE EXPERIENCE N=64



Two-thirds of the respondents reported academic or intellectual aspects of college as being of value to them. Among these were increased ability to evaluate, broadened perspectives, greater understanding of people and ideas, more clearly-defined interests, increased knowledge, and preparation for advanced learning.

Three-fifths of the group referred to social experiences they had had in college which were valuable to them. These included interacting with different kinds of people, developing close friendships with peers of both sexes and some adults, and developing confidence in their ability to deal with other people.

Half the respondents cited valuable personal experiences during college and a fourth reported that their undergraduate experience was of value to them vocationally. Personal growth through interaction with others was frequently reported, along with a sense of competence and self-confidence. Others reported that college had prepared them for their chosen profession, or in usually unspecified ways, increased their economic prospects.

These men and women discussed college as a whole experience, valuable in diverse and interconnected ways. The following quotations suggest the variety of insights and outcomes that 1971 respondents attributed to their college experience.

> *Academically, I feel my experience at Buffalo enabled me to evaluate things I learned and critically analyze all viewpoints. I feel, even more important, that my college experience enabled me to be tolerant and accept people who's backgrounds and values were different than mine. It also enabled me to create priorities in my life and not be afraid to act upon them.*

> *Broadening of interests I feel now to be the most important aspects. Not just academic interests, but cultural and social interests that are available at a large university - movies, theatre performances, speakers. I feel very important in broadening one's outlook toward life.*

College has given me the financial security which was my original reason for going in the first place. More than that it taught me to deal with people, have more confidence in myself and look at most things from all sides and find beauty in places where other people don't. Security is nice but the others are equally if not more important.

Part of the maturing process - socializing, educating. Allowed me to meet people from different cultures and different backgrounds. Made it possible for me to go to Dental School. Kept me out of the armed services.

I hate to say that the academic aspect was minimal. I guess it assisted me in some facts and in exercising my mind to study, concentration. But, it certainly wasn't what I gained most while at college. The non-academic. That was chock-full of meaning for me! In the people who helped me see me. Period!

Academically it has, of course, prepared me for my profession. It also changed some of my attitudes toward people, race, religion and politics. It has also improved my economic lot.

The academic part of the school work is going to prepare me for my profession. However, the non-academic life of the university has given me new perspectives on other people plus life in general.

A few members of the group reported that nothing about their undergraduate experience was valuable to them. Others said that college was not academically or vocationally valuable, although it had been of value personally or socially. An early drop out stated that the experience had clarified his personal interests and goals, and he had left school pleased with the personal insights he had gained.

So far, I feel that college has not done a thing for me. I'm not finished yet, but I hope by the time I graduate (if I do) that it will have more of a value than it has up to the present time.

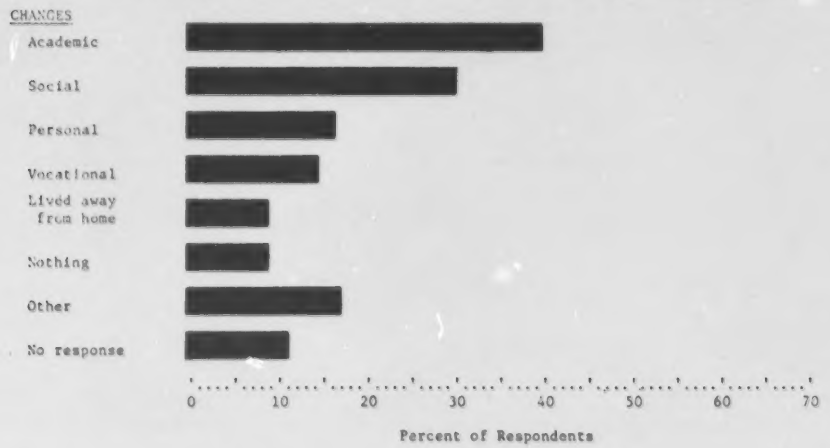
I am glad that I had the opportunity to see first-hand what college life was like. The value, I would say, was in learning that it just wasn't for me.

Degree status seemed related to perceptions of the value of college experience. Those who had completed a baccalaureate by June 1971 named the greatest variety of values. More often than those without the degree, they reported that college had been academically or intellectually, socially, and vocationally valuable. Those who had not completed a bachelor's degree most frequently reported that college had been personally valuable to them.

INCREASING THE VALUE OF COLLEGE EXPERIENCE

What, if anything, could have made your undergraduate years of more value to you? Responses to this question took the form of those things people wished they had done or had done differently with their undergraduate experience. Most frequently mentioned were academic changes (Figure 6.2).

Figure 6.2 CHANGES THAT WOULD HAVE MADE COLLEGE MORE VALUABLE N=64



About two-fifths of the respondents wished they had changed majors, taken other courses, or worked harder on their courses to increase the academic value of their undergraduate work.

In many ways I'm sorry that I didn't take courses of greater variety and get involved with more different groups of people on campus. All in all I'm quite satisfied with my years at UB.

A more varied and versatile curriculum. This is my fault in that I didn't select courses from different schools.

Thirty percent of the group cited social changes they would like to have made during their college days, most commenting that they would like to have been more active socially, more involved with diverse groups of people in extracurricular pursuits, or more open to friendships.

I would have got involved with more people and activities and I would have tried to obtain the close relationship I had with my teacher the last few years while I was an underclassman.

Meeting more people, taking part in more extracurricular activities, chosen a different major in the liberal arts field.

Sixteen percent of the sample mentioned personal changes that would have made their college experience more valuable to them, many wishing they had been more confident or outgoing. Others wished they had had greater interest in their school work, greater ability to concentrate on what they are doing, greater motivation to meet educational goals, or greater emotional maturity or stability.

More maturity, more emotional stability, greater ability to concentrate on one thing at a time.

Being more aware and more interested in learning all I could. Being more aware of myself in what I was doing - what I'm trying to get at is - I don't feel now that I made the most of my undergraduate years. I feel now that I let time slip by without being too aware of what was going on.

Fourteen percent wished they had had vocational guidance and preparation while in school. They reported having had no clear-cut goals to pursue, or realistic notions of what values could be derived from the college experience.

> *I really didn't know what I wanted to do upon graduation. I think that vocational counseling may have been helpful as I knew very little about ramifications of selecting one major or another. If I would have chosen social welfare as a major - I would have been able to go right to a job and wouldn't have to go on for further study, etc.*

A few people reported that nothing in particular would have increased the value of their experience for them, and others wished they had lived away from home rather than commuting. A variety of other changes also were mentioned. A few members of the group said that everything they needed had been available to them on campus. Unfortunately, they had not known what they wanted or had not realized that their own initiative was all that was lacking to enhance their experience.

> *I don't think there could have been anything external that could make college more valuable. I look back on it now and realize that all of the things that you could possibly want were right there on campus for the taking. I think its more a matter of what you yourself want and how much you are willing to put yourself out to get it. I'm sorry now that I didn't realize this at the time and didn't try to become more involved.*

Others were wholly satisfied with their college years.

> *I just wish they had been longer!*

OBSERVATIONS

The 1971 respondents who had entered SUNY/B in 1966 found their college experience valuable whether or not they had completed a baccalaureate. Many of them had some insights into changes that would have made the undergraduate years more valuable to them. Men and women cited similar values and possible changes and only two differences in response between the residence groups merit mention: more often than others, residents reported that college was valuable to them in their personal growth or development; and they, more often than commuters, cited changes that would have made their undergraduate experience more valuable - particularly academic changes.

It is interesting that, in response to an open ended question, these men and women did not refer to changes that the university could have made to increase the value of their college experience. The University was changing rapidly during the late 1960's. During these years SUNY/B drastically revised its parietal rules, instituted the satisfactory-unsatisfactory grading option, eased distribution requirements, made it possible for students to write their own programs, and reduced the course load for full-time students from five three-hour courses to four four-hour courses. Respondents had experienced their school as a liberal environment rapidly reforming itself. It is not surprising that they did not mention ways in which the University could change further to accommodate their needs. Rather they mentioned ways in which they could better have taken advantage of the opportunities that were available to them.

COMMENT

Space was provided for respondent comments. Some used the space for personal greetings, some for overviews of their life situations, others for observations about the state of the world. Most commented upon this research in general, or specifically about their experience answering the questionnaire. A selection of these comments appears below.

Thanks for this survey. It always seems to come at a time when I need to re-evaluate where I stand and in what directions I'm headed. The questions on this form are all relevant - some of them are really hard to answer - and in some ways they really help to set my perspectives straight. How can anything that helps me so much be helping you, too!! I hope I have answered your questions to the fullest. I sit here and write a sentence and in my mind I can just hear you saying "Why?" so I write a little more and I hear "Why?" again. Honestly, this could go on forever! P.S. I read that and really have to laugh. I've tried to be honest and in my efforts to do so, I think I've come across as neurotic and not a very happy person at all. That's not entirely true!!

I didn't think that the study would be extended past our four years at U/B but I'm glad it is. I would be interested in reading findings, results, etc. of the study.

- Asking for responses by March I felt as an imposition on my time - I feel they could have been sent out sooner or a longer period of time given to respond - Although, I was relieved to get it - I knew you'd find all of us - and knew I'd get my little questionnaire sooner or later - feel the questions were geared too much to those who have gone out and are working.

I would like to express some candid statements about this program and myself. I feel that I learned to express my feelings more openly and easily as I became more involved with this program. Thank you.

Aside from my usual doubts about my own position in society and disgust with graduate school, I've been content this year and happy with the people I've met.

I was very disappointed at the loss of the football team and even more so at the lack of interest shown by the students when this fact was made known. A giant Amherst campus is a nice thing to have but football is one of the few things that gave students a feeling of belonging. To the few that really enjoyed it I'm sure it will be missed.

I've enjoyed filling this out (a couple of years I didn't -- fill it out, I mean). Some of it wasn't easy but it made me take a look at myself.

I enjoyed filling out this questionnaire, although it was not as much fun as the personal interviews we used to have. I look forward to next year's questionnaire. Thank you.

This questionnaire gave me a chance to semi-put together what's been happening this year. Thanks.
See you next year!!

I'm sorry for being late but my mood has been such that I thought I couldn't give a truly fair response. Everyone I know, it seems is stark staring bored and restless -- family, friends and co-workers.
My response may be affected by this but I don't think as much as they would have been.

Can't wait till summer.

What can I say -- please forgive the spelling? If my answers sound too wise-assed try to keep in mind that I'm experiencing a joyess life... and maybe I'm just a little too sure of myself!!

joy to you

Sorry that I was so late in returning the form. I had a load of work and that and the combination of my laziness accounts for my tardiness.

I'm sorry I am so late with this. My answers reflect what I feel at this time. Earlier, I could not really conceptualize, even to myself, what I felt. It's strange how the same objective phenomena can illicit such a multitude of different feelings, from one time to another. From day to day I can feel what seems to be opposite feelings about the same thing (like ultimate occupational goal).

Will I be filling one of these out for fifty years?

1. It is very difficult to express myself on paper to many of these broad, soul-searching questions. Writing something down tends to overly cement and dramatize a possibly casual comment of mine. 2. I also believe that my mood could affect my answers to these questions. 3. I would like to point out, however, that I am not criticizing these questions as I believe they are very well designed and pertinent. 4. You probably would get better answers in an interview situation, however my own past unwillingness to cooperate with your interview efforts and the lateness of getting in this questionnaire testify to the fact that I probably would not cooperate with arranging an interview. 5. Also, I would be interested in knowing when the next report on this study will be ready as I would find post-college information on my class very interesting.

It's an easier and is more thorough to have oral interviews rather than written.

My answers are really real, serious, to use one of my least favorite words. I've been direct and to the point even though it may read to you like a free association test. Maturity is fitting well, and I like the directions I'm going in, even though I don't know intellectually where I'm going, I have an overall sense of intuition which is radiantly clear. My years of college are important not scholastically, or intellectually, but in the sense that they were a period of new growth, when I was unhappy and had to learn how to deal with and solve all my problems, so that I would no longer have problems as such but simply <u>know</u> how to deal with my life.

One thing this year has taught me is that uncertainty has value along with its liabilities. I am still in contact with many of my college friends who are married and seem to be leading secure and happy lives. I have seen that I am not they and they not I and that security and routine have a price.
I have become less afraid to be myself and have stopped worrying about vague tomorrows to think of improving the present.

APPENDIX

1971 BIOGRAPHY OF A CLASS QUESTIONNAIRE
For 1966 Freshman Interview Group

I NAME _____
(Married women, please include maiden name as well as husband's first name)

II ADDRESS _____

_____

III MARITAL STATUS

		Date
A Single _____	Married _____	_____
	Divorced _____	_____
	Widowed _____	_____

B How do you feel about your marital status?
Why?

_____

_____

_____

_____

IV CHILDREN

A Do you have any children? ___Yes ___No
1. If so: Number Ages

1 _____ _____
2 _____ _____ _____
3 _____ _____ _____ _____

B If you are a parent how do you feel about being one?
Why?

_____

_____

_____

_____

V LIVING ARRANGEMENT

A Setting (e.g., urban, suburban, rural, communal, under a lily pad)
Please describe it.

B Dwelling (e.g., house, apartment, dormitory, trailer, grass hut)
Please describe it.

C People (e.g., living alone, with parents, male(s), female(s), both)
Please describe the situation.

D How do you feel about your living arrangement?
Why?

VI LEISURE TIME

In what ways do you spend your leisure time?

VII EDUCATIONAL INVOLVEMENT

A. In what, if any, educational pursuits have you been involved this year? (Check, as many as apply.)

	Part Time	Full Time	Toward Degree	Not Degree
1. None				
Undergraduate school				
Graduate school				
Vocational school				
Course for pleasure*				
Other*				

*Please specify_____

_____

2. Name of School(s)_____

3. How do you feel about your educational experience this year? Why?

_____

_____

_____

_____

B Have your long range educational plans changed during the past year?
___Yes ___No

1. If so: In what way?
What influenced the change?
How do you feel about the change?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

VIII VOCATION

A. Were your vocational plans for this year realized? ___Yes ___No

1. If so: How did they work out?
How do you feel about it?
Why?

2. If not: What happened?
How do you feel about it?
Why?

B. Are you working now? ___Yes ___No

1. If not: a. What are you doing now?
How do you feel about it?
Why?

VIII Vocation (cont'd)

b. What is your source of financial support (e.g., scholarship, parents, spouse, friend, pension, rich uncle)?

2. If so: a. How many hours a week?

b. What type of work?
What do you do?

c. What kind of setting (e.g., industry, government, academic [what level?], mama-papa store)? Please describe it.

d. How do you feel about your job?
In what ways is it satisfying?
In what ways dissatisfying?

VIII Vocation (cont'd)

e. Is your undergraduate course work relevant to your job? ___Yes ___No

(1) If so: In what way?

_____

_____

_____

_____

f. Is your job in the vocational area you prefer? ___Yes ___No

(1) If not: (a) Why not?
How do you feel about it?
Why?

_____

_____

_____

_____

(b) What area do you prefer and what, if anything, do you plan to do about getting into it?

_____

_____

_____

_____

C What is your ultimate vocational goal now?_____

1. Is this a change from last year? ___Yes ___No

a. If so: What influenced the change?
How do you feel about it?
Why?

_____

_____

_____

_____

IX INTERESTS

A What, if any, interests have you developed during the past year?

B What, if any, interests are you pursuing this year that you developed during the period 1966-1970?

X SOCIAL ISSUES

A What, if any, social issues were you concerned about previous this year?

B What, if anything, did you do in regard to your concern?

C What, if any, social issues are you concerned about this year?

D What, if anything, did you do this year in regard to your concern?

XI COLLEGE EXPERIENCE

A From your present perspective, what do you see as the value of your college experience - both academic and non-academic?

B What, if anything, could have made your undergraduate years of more value to you?

XII YOU

A What has given you the most satisfaction during the last year? Why?

B What has given you the most dissatisfaction? Why?

C What has been most difficult for you to cope with this year? How successful do you feel you have been?

D How would you describe yourself?

XII E In what, if any, ways have you changed this year?

F In what, if any, ways would you like to change during the next 5 years?

G What one word best describes how you feel about yourself_____

H In what ways was your life this year different from what you had expected it to be?
How do you feel about it?
Why?

XII I What do you expect to be doing between now and spring 1972?

XIII COMMENTS (About anything!)

That's all for this year

THANK YOU!